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Ajit Doval attends virtual BRICS meeting hosted by Chinese NSA
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U.S. Federal Reserve raises interest rate by 75 bps to tame inflation
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India's trade gap widens as imports surge 63% and exports rise 20.6%
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Hardik named India skipper for T20Is against Ireland
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NEARBY

CET from today; centres to be videographed

BENGALURU

The Common Entrance Test will be held from June 16 to 18. This will pave the way to seek admission into Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary, Pharmacy and other courses. C.N. Ashwath Narayan, Minister for Higher Education, said here on Wednesday that this year, all the examination centres will be videographed.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 4

Daughter of judge held in murder case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday arrested a woman in connection with the murder of national-level shooter and lawyer Sukhmanpreet Singh, aka Sippy Sidhu in Chandigarh in 2015.

The accused, Kalyani Singh, is the daughter of the Acting Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court, said an agency official, adding that the case appeared to be that of a relationship gone sour.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10

17 Opposition parties to field a candidate for Presidential poll

Pawar declines offer; he will host next meeting on June 20 to finalise nominee

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

Kick-starting the consultations on putting up a joint candidate for the Presidential election, 17 Opposition parties attended a meeting hosted by West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress president Mamata Banerjee in New Delhi on Wednesday.

At the end of the 90-minute meeting, the parties came up with a statement expressing their intent to field a common candidate, but no name was finalised.

There was consensus on NCP patriarch Sharad Pawar's name, but he declined the offer. Names of former West Bengal Governor Gopal Krishna Gandhi and former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah are in contention.

The next meeting, hosted by Mr. Pawar, will be held on June 20 in New Delhi to finalise the name. In the meantime, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, Mr. Pawar and Ms. Banerjee have been allocated the responsibility of speaking to heads of all Opposition parties.

One platform: West Bengal CM and Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee, along with Opposition party leaders, in New Delhi on Wednesday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Political activist Sudheendra Kulkarni read out the joint resolution: "In the forthcoming Presidential election, which is being held in the year of the 75th anniversary of India's Independence, we have decided to field a common candidate who can truly serve as the custodian of the Constitution and stop the Modi government from doing further damage to the Indian democracy and social fabric."

With Ms. Banerjee and Mr. Pawar hosting the two rounds of the meetings on the Presidential election, the Congress lost the opportunity to lead the consultations. In fact, Congress president Sonia Gandhi was the first off the block to reach out to the Opposition leaders to build a consensus soon after the Election Commission announced the poll dates.

The Trinamool had sent invites to 22 leaders. The list included eight Chief Ministers (Arvind Kejriwal, Pinarayi Vijayan, Naveen Patnaik, K. Chandrasekhar Rao, M.K. Stalin, Uddhav Thackeray, Hemant Soren and Bhagwant Mann). Leaders representing 17 political parties attended the meeting.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10

India a global security power: U.S. top diplomat

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON DC

India is a global security power and the U.S. is keen for India to project this power, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia, Donald Lu, said.

During a wide-ranging interview with *The Hindu*, Mr. Lu said India was "not only a security provider in the narrow Indian subcontinent" but "a global security power now". "And that's what's in the interest of the United States – that you are militarily ready, but that you are also able to project that power far beyond your borders, because we are partners that share a common view of the security of Asia and of the world and we want India to be able to project that power."

On wait times for drop-box appointments for HI-B visas at U.S. missions in India, Mr. Lu said the administration was aware of the issue and the missions were fully staffed again (this was not the case earlier due to the pandemic). The visa wait times will go back to pre-pandemic levels "over the next few months", as per Mr. Lu.

INTERVIEW ▸ PAGE 12

Cabinet approves mega 5G auction

Tech firms can set up captive networks

Need for speed

A look at how 5G compares to previous technologies. 5G's maximum data speed is 10 times higher than the presently used 4G

Year	Generation	Maximum data speed
1979	1G	none (voice only)
1991	2G	14.4 Kbps
2000	2.5G	53.6 Kbps
2001	3G	384 Kbps
2010	4G	100 Mbps
2020	5G	1 Gbps

SOURCE: GRAPHIC NEWS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet has approved the auction of airwaves capable of offering fifth generation, or 5G, telecom services, including ultra high-speed Internet, and gave its nod for setting up of captive 5G networks by big tech firms.

The auction of over 72 GHz of the spectrum will be held by July-end, said an official statement detailing the decision taken by the Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at its meeting held on Tuesday.

The spectrum auction will start on July 26, 2022.

Sources said that the Cabinet has approved 5G auctions at reserve prices recommended by the sector regulator, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

TRAI had earlier recommended about a 39% reduction in the reserve or floor price for the sale of 5G spectrum for mobile services.

While the 5G spectrum in nine frequency bands will be auctioned to telecom operators such as Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio, the Notice Inviting Applications – bid-related document issued by the Department of Telecom (DoT) – said big tech firms for the time being will be allowed to take the 5G spectrum for their captive non-public network, on lease from the telecom companies.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10

Council polls: BJP, Congress win one seat each

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The ruling BJP and the Congress on Wednesday won one seat each in the Legislative Council from the teachers constituencies, with the BJP nominee and former Chairman Basavaraj Horatti winning a record eighth successive electoral battle. The two parties were leading in one seat each in the graduates constituencies at the time of going to press.

The BJP won the Karnataka West Teachers seat and was leading in the Karnataka North-west Graduates constituency, while the Congress won the Karnataka North-west Teachers constituency and was leading in the Karnataka South Graduates constituency. Before the election results, the BJP held 38 seats in the 75-member Upper House while the Congress and the Janata Dal (Secular) held 24 and nine seats, respectively, in the House.

Mr. Horatti's record came in the West Teachers constituency where he trounced his one-time associate and Congress candidate Basavaraj Gurikar by a margin of 4,669 votes. Mr. Horatti polled 9,266 votes as against Mr. Gurikar who polled 4,597 votes.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 6

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NEWS IN NUMBERS

Pouring down

27 The number of years after which Cherrapunji experienced a record high rainfall of 811.6 mm in 24 hours on Wednesday, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). One of the wettest places in the world, Cherrapunji has recorded more than 750 mm of precipitation on a June day on 10 occasions since the IMD started keeping records. The department further informed that intense rainfall is likely to continue in the northeast and sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim in the next five days. PTI

Economic gains rise

37 India's rank in the World Competitiveness Index, an annual index compiled by the Institute for Management Development based on gains in economic performance. India has witnessed the sharpest rise among the Asian economies, with a jump of six positions from 43rd rank in 2021. Denmark has moved to the top of the 63-nation list from the third position last year, while Switzerland slipped from the top ranking to the second position and Singapore reached the third spot from fifth, a global study showed on Wednesday. PTI

Assistance for athletes

6.28 In ₹ lakh, the financial assistance allocated for each residential athlete training at accredited academies as per the annual Khelo India scholarship scheme. This includes an annual out-of-pocket allowance (OPA) of ₹1.20 lakh, according to a release by the Sports Authority of India (SAI). The SAI has sanctioned a total of ₹6.52 crore as OPA for 2,189 Khelo India athletes across 21 disciplines, including para, for the April-June period. The OPA will be transferred directly to the athlete's bank account. PTI

Asia's World Cup entry

6 The record number of teams to be representing the Asian football confederation at the World Cup for the first time in history. Qatar's hosting of the tournament between November 21 and December 18 this year, has added to Asia's usual automatic four qualification spots filled by Saudi Arabia, Japan, Iran and South Korea. South Korea had reached the semifinals while Japan made it to the Round of 16 in 2002 when the two countries co-hosted the tournament, but Asia has underperformed in every edition since. Europe is sending 13 teams. AP

War hinders harvest

1.435 In $ billion, the total value of the winter crops across an area of 2.4 million hectares that will remain unharvested in Ukraine because of Russia's invasion, according to the Ukrainian agriculture Ministry. It said the agriculture sector had so far suffered losses of $4.292 billion because of the invasion. It is estimated that the number of animals killed in areas affected by fighting included 42,000 sheep and goats, 92,000 cows, 2,58,000 pigs and more than 5.7 million birds. REUTERS

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

EXPLAINER

The fragile state of nuclear disarmament

How has India fared in SIPRI's annual report? Is the world becoming increasingly more militarised?

THE GIST

- The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released its yearbook a few days back highlighting some trends of the past year in international security. Russia leads the charge in absolute numbers of nuclear inventory.
- India is the top weapons importer during the 2017-2021 period. Other countries to feature in the top five arms importers list include Saudi Arabia, Egypt, China, and Australia. According to SIPRI, these five nation states account for 38% of total global arms import.
- Recent geopolitical events transpiring around the world in practically all regions have made the global security climate more unstable. Military modernisation is seen to be a global trend. All nuclear weapon owning states have, over the years, stated and worked upon their intention to modernise multiple facets of their armed forces.

RISHABH KACHROO

The story so far: The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released its yearbook a few days back highlighting some worrying trends of the past year in international security. The expected rise of the global nuclear arsenal was the chief cause of concern among SIPRI experts. The comprehensive report claims that while absolute numbers of nuclear arsenal have reduced, they are expected to grow over the next decade.

What have been the trends in military spending?

During 2012-2021, military spending as a percentage of gross domestic product has largely been stable. If anything, the average worldwide trend has been slightly downward. Russia leads the charge in absolute numbers of nuclear inventory (5977 against the U.S.'s 5428), however it is the U.S. that has the largest number of deployed warheads (1744 against Russia's 1588). The U.K. has 225 nuclear weapons in its inventory, while France has 290, China has 350, India has 160, Pakistan has 165. Israel is estimated to have 90 and North Korea 20.

It is concerning, to say the least, to see how global discourse has created a sense of fear around China's military modernisation and their upward trend in nuclear weapons development while the thousands of nuclear weapons held by the U.S. don't seem to attract a similar level of attention.

What about global arms imports?

Military modernisation is seen to be a global trend. All nuclear weapon owning states have, over the years, stated and worked upon their intention to modernise multiple facets of their armed forces–ranging from the development of newer and more efficient nuclear submarines, aircraft carriers, fighter jets, manned and unmanned aerial vehicles to the growing spread of the use of missile defence systems which may result in aggravating security concerns for other countries.

The yearbook has highlighted India as being the top weapons importer during the 2017-2021 period. Other countries to feature in the top five arms importers list include Saudi Arabia, Egypt, China, and Australia. According to SIPRI, these five nation states account for 38% of total global arms import.

What are the key developments/concerns flagged by the yearbook?

The yearbook mentions low level border clashes between India and Pakistan, the civil war in Afghanistan, and the armed conflict in Myanmar as some of the worrying indicators of an unstable system. It also highlighted three cause of concern trends: Chinese-American rivalry, involvement of state and non-state actors in multiple conflicts, and the challenge that climatic and weather hazards pose. It is important to note here that the threat posed by climate change seems to feature in the report only nominally.

The marginal downsizing observed in the nuclear arsenal has come mostly from the U.S. and Russia dismantling retired warheads. But the Russian invasion of Ukraine has raised some serious eyebrows because of the continuous rhetoric from the Kremlin over them not shying away from the use of nuclear weapons. China's recent activities surrounding construction of 300 new nuclear missile silos have also been turning heads. Speaking at the Shangri-La Dialogue, Chinese Defence Minister, Wei Fenghe, claimed that while they have made "impressive progress" vis-à-vis their nuclear arsenal, the primary purpose of said arsenal continues to be self-defence. Over in the subcontinent, India and Pakistan seem to be making gains over their nuclear arsenal (in absolute numbers) while also looking at the development and procurement of newer and more efficient forms of delivery systems.

Has Iran inflated its military expenditure?

The SIPRI yearbook claims that while there were some advances over the rollout of the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Iran increased its enrichment of Uranium-235 to 60% in 2021. It also reported that Iran's military budget grew to $24.6 billion, growing for the first time in four years. However, some analysts believe that SIPRI has, over the years, overstated Iran's military expenditure. This is based on there not being a single Iranian exchange rate, resulting in a hyperinflated estimation of expenditure by SIPRI analysts.

It is claimed that SIPRI is aware of this 'accusation' and will investigate the 'exchange rate issue'.

What is the general attitude among countries about existing nuclear and arms related treaties?

Earlier this year, the leaders of the P5 countries (China, France, Russia, the U.K. and the U.S.) issued a joint statement affirming the belief that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought". The joint statement also highlighted their seemingly collective belief that bilateral and multilateral arms control agreements and commitments were indeed important. The dichotomy of this sentiment against the upward trend in absolute numbers of arms and nuclear arsenals is rather unsettling. One could however claim that even with these upward trends, the nation states are making sure to remain well within the ambit of what the treaties and agreements ask for. The tactic here seems to be to milk the treaties and agreements to the hilt. The states are aware of the value of the rhetoric and the security dilemma that their actions present. The recent Russian invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent NATO bids by Finland and Sweden seem to be telling events. While the Ukrainian invasion saw Russian military and political establishments hype-up its nuclear attack rhetoric against Ukraine, its primary leadership (both civil and military) had been rather diplomatic and 'relatively' cordial in its treatment of the Finnish and Swedish NATO bids.

Clear and constant communication between the countries involved was instrumental in making sure no unintended meanings were construed by the parties involved. The Russians seem to protract this invasion and hope to win it by exhausting Ukraine's defence capabilities.

The year 2021 also saw the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, 2017 coming into effect. The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Missile Technology Control Regimes (MTCR) held their annual meetings despite decision making being limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

What lies ahead?

The recent geopolitical events transpiring around the world in practically all regions have made the global security climate more unstable. A sense of precariousness lulls the air. It is further aided by actions of authoritarian leaders of not just non-democratic systems but also of strongmen leaders of democratic systems. The muscular military policies of these nations coupled with the continuous use of rhetoric that fuel public sentiment over the state's use of military assets make ripe conditions for the situation to further deteriorate. A strong political opposition would be needed to help keep the ruling dispensation in check. Furthermore, the two largest nuclear weapons holding states need to take on a more engaging role in the international arena. SIPRI's yearbook, while not being devoid of some challenges, forces us to look critically at how the global disarmament project seems to be going.

Rishabh Kachroo is a Ph.D scholar at the department of International Relations and Governance Studies at Shiv Nadar University

EXPLAINER

The controversy around the Northern Ireland Protocol

Why is the European Union threatening legal action against the U.K.? How is the Johnson administration justifying the breach of international obligations?

G. SAMPATH

The story so far: The Boris Johnson administration has come up with a new legislation, the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill, which would enable the U.K. to override provisions of the Brexit deal that concern trading arrangements in Northern Ireland – the Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP). The European Union (EU) has said that the proposed law violates international law and has threatened to take legal action against the U.K. if it goes ahead with the legislation.

What exactly is the NIP?

Northern Ireland is the only part of the U.K. that shares a land border with the EU, as the Republic of Ireland (or Ireland) is an EU member-state. As long as the U.K. was part of the EU, things were fine. But with Brexit, the U.K. exited the EU's customs union. This created a problem whose solution needed two seemingly contradictory outcomes: preserving the sanctity of the EU's single market, as well as that of the U.K.'s domestic market. The NIP's solution was to avoid a customs check at the actual customs border – on the island of Ireland, between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland – as this would have violated the 1998 Good Friday Agreement and risked instability in a region with a volatile past. It instead shifted the customs border to that between Northern Ireland and Britain, effectively at the former's ports. As per the NIP, goods flowing into Northern Ireland would be checked at this 'sea border' before entering the island, and Northern Ireland would continue to follow EU rules in product standards.

Why did the U.K. come up with the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill?

The Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP) has been a lingering issue for the U.K. almost from the day Brexit was signed. In fact, back in July 2021, the Boris Johnson administration announced its intent to renegotiate the NIP. But with efforts at negotiations not producing the results it wanted, it decided to proceed with a unilateral revamp of the NIP via domestic legislation. The main irritant for the U.K. in the current version of the NIP was the creation of "unacceptable barriers" to trade within the U.K. internal market – between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It has sparked complaints from businesses about the enormous paperwork needed for supply of goods and services to Northern Ireland despite it being within the sovereign territory of the U.K. Also, the Unionists of Northern Ireland (the section loyal to the U.K.) are

Protestors in support of the NIP in Northern Ireland on May 16. • AP

unhappy with the NIP, and resent having to put up with a provision that effectively puts them at one remove from the U.K., when compared with citizens in other parts of the U.K. Northern Ireland's main unionist party is, in fact, blocking the formation of a new power-sharing government in Belfast, saying it won't take part until the NIP rules are scrapped. It is in this context that the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill seeks to empower the U.K. government to override key provisions of the NIP.

How does the proposed Bill undermine the NIP?

Instead of subjecting all goods moving between Britain and Northern Ireland to customs checks, the new Bills proposes two categories of goods and checks: goods meant only for Northern Ireland would go in a 'green lane' and will be exempt from any checks, while goods headed for Ireland and the EU would go into a 'red lane' where they will be subjected to all the checks and customs controls. Secondly, the Bill would remove EU oversight on state subsidies and value-added taxes in Northern Ireland. Third, the Bill proposes settlement of trade disputes and the enforcement of the NIP by an independent body rather than the European Court of Justice. Lastly, the Bill wants to give businesses the choice of selling their goods in Northern Ireland either according to the U.K. rules or the EU rules, in effect, proposing a dual regulatory regime instead of the single (EU) one as per the NIP.

What has been the reaction to the proposed Bill?

The Bill has triggered strong pushback from MPs belonging to Mr. Johnson's own party, from Irish legislators, and from EU officials. All of them have pointed out that the legislation would violate international law, damage the U.K.'s reputation as a trade partner, and spark a trade war with the EU. The EU's executive branch announced on June 15 that it would be taking legal action against the U.K. for violating international law.

How has the Johnson administration justified the Bill?

The Johnson administration has sought to justify its breach of its obligations under the Brexit agreement by invoking a principle of international law known as the "doctrine of necessity". The UN's International Law Commission allows a state to invoke this doctrine when its "essential interests" are facing a "grave and imminent peril". The Johnson administration believes that this emergency loophole will enable it to defeat any legal challenge to its proposed Bill. The "grave peril" in this context, according to the British government, is the threat posed by the NIP to the Good Friday Agreement. "The maintenance of stable social and political conditions in Northern Ireland, the protection of the 1998 Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement...and the preservation and fostering of social and economic ties between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom, are essential interests of the United Kingdom," says a statement from the U.K. Foreign Secretary.

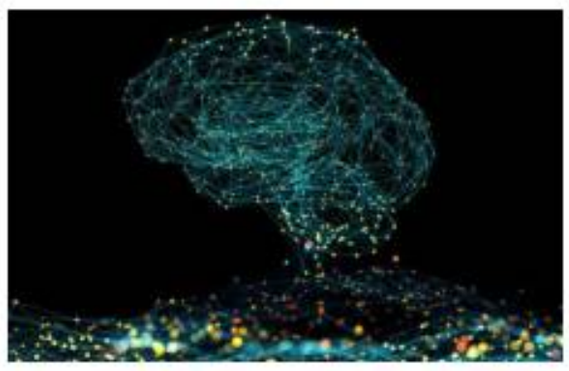
THE GIST

- The Boris Johnson administration has come up with a new legislation, the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill, which would enable the U.K. to override provisions of the Brexit deal that concern trading arrangements outlined in the Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP)
- The main irritant for the U.K. in the current version of the NIP was the creation of 'unacceptable barriers' to trade within the internal market, between Britain and Northern Ireland.
- The Johnson administration has sought to justify its breach of obligations by invoking the "doctrine of necessity" as the NIP according to them, posits a "grave and imminent peril" to the Good Friday Agreement.

Can Google chatbot be sentient?

Is there a chance of Artificial Intelligence technologies becoming 'conscious'?

T.V. VENKATESWARAN



The story so far: Blake Lemoine, a U.S. military veteran, identifies himself as a priest, an ex-convict and an Artificial Intelligence (AI) researcher. He was engaged by Google to test for bias/hate speech in the Language Model for Dialogue Applications (LaMDA), Google's nextGen conversational agent. He was sent away on paid leave after claiming that the updated software is now sentient. He claims that the neural network with deep learning capacity has the consciousness of a child of seven or eight years old. He argues that consent from the software must be obtained before experiments are run on it. Google and many tech experts have dismissed the claim. However, this episode, which came on the heels of Google firing Timnit Gebru over her warnings on their unethical AI, has caused ripples in social media.

Is AI technology here?

AI technology appears futuristic. However, Facebook's facial recognition software which identifies faces in the photos we post, the voice recognition software that translates commands we bark at Alexa, and the Google Translate app are all examples of AI tech already around us.

Inspired by the mathematician Alan Turing's answer to the question 'Can a machine think?', AI tech today aims to satisfy the Turing test to qualify as 'intelligent'. Turing was the designer and builder of the world's first computer, ENIGMA, which was used to break the German codes during the Second World War. To test if a machine 'thinks', Turing devised a practical solution. Place a computer in a closed room and a human in another. If an interrogator interacting with the machine and the human cannot discriminate between them, then Turing said that the computer should be construed as 'intelligent'. We use the reverse Turing test, CAPTCHA, to limit technology access to humans and keep the bots at bay.

Which were the first chatbots to be devised?

As electronics improved and first-generation computers came about, Joseph Weizenbaum of the MIT Artificial Intelligence Laboratory built ELIZA, a computer programme with which users could chat. ALICE (Artificial Linguistic Internet Computer Entity), another early chatbot developed by Richard Wallace, was capable of simulating human interaction. In the 1930s, linguist George Kingsley Zipf analysed the typical human speech and found that most of the utterances began with 2,000 words. Using this information, Wallace theorised that the bulk of commonplace chitchat in everyday interaction was limited. He found that just about 40,000 responses were enough to respond to 95% of what people chatted about. With assistance from about 500 volunteers, Wallace continuously improved ALICE's responses repertoire by analysing user chats, making the fake conversions look real. The software won the Loebner Prize as "the most human computer" at the Turing Test contests in 2000, 2001, and 2004.

What is a neural network?

A neural network is an AI tech that attempts to mimic the web of neurons in the brain to learn and behave like humans. Early efforts in building neural networks targeted image recognition. The artificial neural network (ANN) needs to be trained like a dog before being commanded. For example, during the image recognition training, thousands of specific cat images are broken down to pixels and fed into the ANN. Using complex algorithms, the ANN's mathematical system extracts particular characteristics like the line that curves from right to left at a certain angle, edges or several lines that merge to form a larger shape from each cat image. The software learns to recognise the key patterns that delineate what a general 'cat' looks like from these parameters.

Early machine learning software needed human assistance. The training images had to be labelled as 'cats', 'dogs' and so on by humans before being fed into the system. In contrast, access to big data and a powerful processor is enough for the emerging deep learning softwares. The App learns by itself, unsupervised by humans, by sorting and sifting through the massive data and finding the hidden patterns.

What is LaMDA?

LaMDA is short for 'Language Model for Dialogue Applications', Google's modern conversational agent enabled with a neural network capable of deep learning. Instead of images of cats and dogs, the algorithm is trained using 1.56 trillion words of public dialogue data and web text on diverse topics. The neural network built on Google's open-source neural network, Transformer, extracted more than 137 billion parameters from this massive database of language data. The chatbot is not yet public, but users are permitted to interact with it. Google claims that LaMDA can make sense of nuanced conversation and engage in a fluid and natural conversation. The LaMDA 0.1 was unveiled at Google's annual developer conference in May 2021, and the LaMDA 0.2 in 2022.

How is LaMDA different from other chatbots?

Chatbots like 'Ask Disha' of the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) are routinely used for customer engagement. The repertoire of topics and chat responses is narrow. The dialogue is predefined and often goal-directed.

LaMDA is Google's answer to the quest for developing a non-goal directed chatbot that dialogues on various subjects. The chatbot would respond the way a family might when they chat over the dinner table; topics meandering from the taste of the food to price rise to bemoaning war in Ukraine. Such advanced conversational agents could revolutionise customer interaction and help AI-enabled internet search, Google hopes.

How intelligent are AI's?

The Turing test is a powerful motivator for developing practical AI tools. However, scholars, such as philosopher John Searle, use the 'Chinese Room Argument' to demonstrate that passing the Turing test is inadequate to qualify as intelligent. Once I used Google Translate to read WhatsApp messages in French from a conference organiser in France and in turn replied back to her in French. For some time, she was fooled into thinking that I could speak French. I would have passed the 'Turing test', but no sane person would claim that I know French. This is an example of the Chinese room experiment. The imitation game goes only so far.

Further scholars point out that AI tech uses a false analogy of learning. A baby learns a language from close interaction with caregivers and not by ploughing through a massive amount of language data. Moreover, whether intelligence is the same as sentience is a moot question. However, the seemingly human-like conversational agents rely on pattern recognition, not empathy, wit, candour or intent.

Is the technology dangerous?

The challenges of AI metamorphosing into sentient are far in the future; however, unethical AI perpetuating historical bias and echoing hate speech are the real dangers to watch for. Imagine an AI software trained with past data to select the most suitable candidates from applicants for a supervisory role. Women and marginalised communities hardly would have held such positions in the past, not because they were unqualified, but because they were discriminated against. While we imagine the machine to have no bias, AI software learning from historical data could inadvertently perpetuate discrimination.

T.V. Venkateswaran is Scientist F at Vigyan Prasar, Dept of Science and Technology

Text & Context
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People avoiding news: Reuters report

G. SAMPATH

Most people first access news via smartphones, says the report • PTI

The story so far: According to the 2022 Reuters Institute Digital News Report, trust in news is falling in nearly half the countries surveyed, with significant proportions of the public, especially younger age groups, beginning to turn away from news. Further, news consumption is increasingly happening via social media platforms such as TikTok rather than traditional media.

What is the scope of this report?

This study, an annual one commissioned by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, tracks how news is consumed in different countries. This year's report, the eleventh overall, is based on a survey conducted by YouGuv, a British market research and data analytics firm, in January/February 2022 through online questionnaires. It covers 46 markets in six continents.

What are the major trends highlighted in the report?

Broadly, the report documents the ways in which "the connection between journalism and much of the public may be fraying". It flags six major trends which could have wider socio-political implications. Firstly, people are trusting news content less and less. Second, consumption of traditional news media declined in nearly all the countries surveyed. Third, the proportion of news consumers who say that they "avoid news" has risen sharply across countries, with the report describing the phenomenon as "selective avoidance". Fourth, despite small increases in the proportion of people willing to pay for online news (mostly in richer countries), the growth in digital subscriptions for news content seems to be levelling off.

Next, "the smartphone has become the dominant way in which most people first access news in the morning". Finally, the report notes that while Facebook remained the most-used social network for news, it is TikTok that has become the fastest-growing network. TikTok, however, is currently banned in India.

What is 'selective avoidance' of news?

While the majority of people remained engaged with news, the report finds that a growing minority is increasingly choosing "to ration or limit their exposure to it – or at least to certain types of news". The report calls this behaviour "selective avoidance" and says this is one of the reasons why news consumptions levels have failed to increase as per expectations.

Across markets, respondents cited a variety of reasons for this avoidance. Many said they were "put off by the repetitiveness of the news agenda – especially around politics and COVID-19 (43%). Some said they were "worn out by the news" (29%). A significant number said they avoided news because they didn't trust it (29%). About one-third (36%), especially those under 35, said that news ruined their mood. About 17% said they avoided news because it led to arguments they would rather avoid, while 16% said reading the news led to feelings of powerlessness.

What about preferred modes of news consumption?

Across markets and age groups, text is still king when it comes to news consumption. However, younger audiences, especially 'digital natives' who grew up with networks like Facebook and TikTok, were more likely to say they "watch the news". In India, 58% said that they "mostly read" the news while 17% said they "mostly watch" it.

What does the report say on trends in India?

In the section on India, produced in collaboration with the Asian College of Journalism, the report, observing that "India is a strongly mobile-focussed market," says 72% of the survey respondents accessed news through smartphones and 35% did so via computers.

Legacy print brands and public broadcasters continued to have high trust levels.

Elders finding themselves financially insecure: Survey

Study says this is forcing the senior citizens to work as long as possible

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Senior citizens are increasingly finding themselves financially insecure, pushing them to want to work as long as possible, a survey by HelpAge India, across 22 cities in the country, found.

However, the survey, *Bridge the Gap: Understanding Elder Needs*, revealed that senior citizens in Bengaluru were relatively financially secure, probably owing to more elders working.

The report was released by Halappa Achar, Minister for Women and Child Development, Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens on the occasion of 'World Elder Abuse Awareness Day' on Wednesday.

While 52% of respondents across the country reported their income was inadequate, 79% of the respondents in Bengaluru said they were financially secure. While 71% of elders are not working across the country, 44.5% in Bengaluru were working, second only to Dehradun where 54.5% were found working. The study further found that 48.5% elders said they had access to employment opportunities and 33% said they were willing to work after retirement.

The survey found a majority of elders, 45%, found work from home as the best suited for them to be employed, and 34% asked for "more respect be given to the working elderly" and even suggested increasing the retirement age to help them.

However, the survey is careful to add that it reports the situation amongst the urban middle class, the plight of the poor urban and rural elderly, many who do not have proper support or adequate income or pension, was a moot question. "HelpAge India has been advocating for a universal pension of ₹3,000 a month, so that every senior citizen can live life with dignity. The need to close this gap is more urgent now than ever, post the pandemic," it said in the report.

Meanwhile, the Bengaluru City Elders Helpline, 1090, started in 2002, celebrated its 20th anniversary on Wednesday.

An analysis of the complaints over the last 20 years has revealed that the elderly are not aware of the precautionary measures to be taken to prevent abuse, prompting the Nightingales Medical Trust, which runs the helpline along with the Bengaluru police, to come out with a booklet guiding senior citizens on financial management to their personal security, said S. Premkumar Raja, co-founder, NMT.

Fact sheet

Elders Helpline: **1090**
Started on **June 15, 2002**
Distress calls received in 20 years: **2,35,541**
Number of complaints registered: **10,591**
Cases resolved: **69%** of complaints registered

Most complaints pertained to harassment or cheating

By family members	By private or public agencies	By individuals	Against old age homes
4,176	1,868	2,375	93

Six-day machine tools expo IMTEX from today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Indian Machine Tools Manufacturers' Association (IMTMA) will host the seventh edition of IMTEX FORMING & ToolTech 2022 at Bangalore International Exhibition Center (BIEC) in the city from June 16 to 21.

This year, the exhibition will have participation from 350 exhibitors from 16 countries. The ToolTech 2022 part of the expo will showcase all kinds of parts, accessories, metrology, and systems for machine tools and manufacturing technology, said an IMTMA statement.

Water adalat

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) will hold a water adalat on Thursday from 9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m. at its various sub-divisions.

According to a release, the adalat will be held at its following sub-divisions: South East-6, East 2-2, East Village-2, South Village-1. West 3, South West 3, South East 3, North West 6, Central 3, North West 2, North 3 and North East 2 sub divisions.

A policeman's helping hand

He took initiative to install toilet at Goraguntepalya area

SAMHITHA B.S.
BENGALURU

The Goraguntepalya area is a crucial junction and close to a major travel hub, yet has no toilet facilities, leaving most people, especially women, vulnerable. Now, help has come from an unlikely quarter: a policeman.

Shanthappa Jademmanavar, sub inspector at the Vidhana Soudha police station, has brought in a temporary, yet significant solution: a mobile toilet. What is also special is that it there are rooms for three categories of people: men, women, and transgenders.

The toilet, in fact, was inaugurated by a transgender from the area on Wednesday.

Mr. Jademmanavar told *The Hindu* that he installed the toilet with his own investment and with help from a few like-minded volunteers. "It's a collective effort with like-minded people," he said.

About the idea behind the mobile toilet, he said that while travelling with his mother, she had asked to use a toilet. He felt embarrassed and could not tell her that there were no toilets in the area. That's when he decided to start the campaign.

Through the campaign, he appealed to relevant agencies, but it was in vain. After that, he decided to take up matters into his own hands, with help from a group of youths.

> **It's a collective effort with like-minded people**
> SHANTHAPPA JADEMMANAVAR, Sub inspector at the Vidhana Soudha police station

"The facility has been hired from a private company. The rent per day is around ₹15,000-20,000 but the rates haven't been finalised," said Mr. Jademmanavar.

He was campaigning since February 2022 and trying to grab the attention of the government through social media platforms, but there was no response. To commemorate the 100th day of his campaign, he decided to establish a portable toilet in the area.

One worker has been employed to maintain the facility everyday and he is paid around ₹500 per day by Mr. Jademmanavar.

Apart from that, it consists of a pit which can collect the waste of up to a thousand people and hold it for up to three days. The BBMP vehicle clears the waste once in three days.

Sub inspector Shanthappa Jademmanavar in front of the mobile toilet.

Government of Karnataka
Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department
Office of the Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal.
Phone & Fax No : 08539-220054 email: eemidnkst@rediffmail.com

No:EE/MI&GWDD/Koppal/PB/TP/2022-23/1420 Dated:14.06.2022

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal invites tenders from the eligible tenderers registered civil contractors as per standard bid documents KC-6 on E-procurement portal for 01 numbers of tender works pertaining to Raichur district. The amount put to tender for the mentioned work of **Rs. 74.55 Lakhs.** The tenderers may submit tenders for the mentioned work through E-procurement portal only. **Two cover** tender procedure as per rule 28 of the KTTP act shall be followed.
For more information the contractor can contact the under signed during office hours and all information regarding tenders can be had from website http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in. The tender documents can be downloaded from the above website address on or after **20-06-2022.** Last date & time for receipt of tender is **28-06-2022 time 17.30 hours,** Date & time for opening of technical bid **30-06-2022 time 11.00 hours,** date and time for opening of financial bid **02-07-2022 time 11.00 hours** (If technical bid sanction is accorded by the competent authority).

Sd/- **Executive Engineer**
Minor Irrigation and
Ground Water Development
Department Division Koppal.

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Founder Principal
Good Shepherd International School, Ooty

Elsamma Thomas
Jacob Thomas Julie Pradeesh
Sara Jacob Pradeesh Lawrence
Rhea Praju
Zackary Eliza

And all members of the Good Shepherd Family

GULBARGA ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly owned by Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

No. GESCOM/CEE(O)/EE(RA)/AEE(RA)/AAO(RA)/2022-23/13699-703 Date : 14-06-2022

Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, GESCOM

Dear Consumers,

Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Limited, (GESCOM) has constituted Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) in each Revenue Districts in its jurisdiction as per Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum and Ombudsman) Regulations 2004.

+ Consumers can approach CGRF set up at the respective Revenue District by making an application in Form **'A'** prescribed by the Commission in the event of a complaint not being redressed satisfactorily as provided in the Complaints Handling and Redressal Standards Relating to Distribution and Supply (Standards of Performance) of Power issued by the Commission, shall submit his grievance to the Forum not later than **ONE (1) month** from the date of lodging of the grievance with the licensee. Grievance falling within the purview of section 126, 135, 139 and 161 of IE Act 2003 are excluded from the jurisdiction of the Forum. The services are free of cost.
+ Consumer himself can appear before CGRF or through his Authorized Representative and present his case.
+ The CGRF shall give its orders within 60 days from the date of registration of the complaint.

Name of the Revenue Districts, Chairpersons, Members and Forum Headquarters with contact details where Consumers Can lodge Complaint / Grievance, is as below:

Name of Revenue District	Chairperson	Member Nominated by GESCOM	Member Nominated by KERC	Forum's HQ
Kalaburagi	**Sri. Sahadev B. Mankare** Superintending Engineer (El) O&M Circle, GESCOM Vidyut Bhavan, Vajpayee Layout, Jewargi Road, Kalaburagi-585102 **Mbl:9448359008**	**Sri. A.A.Dinesh** Deputy Controller of Accounts, O&M Circle, GESCOM, Vidyut Bhavan,Vajpayee Layout, Jewargi Road, Kalaburagi.-585102. **Mbl No. 9448482140**	**Sri. Sambaji. S. Tile.** Retired (Deputy Secretary / Ombudsman) Plot No. 8. Sai. Baba Layout Shakti Nagar, Kalaburagi-585103. **Mbl: 9448829955**	**Office of the Superintending Engineer (El),** O&M Circle, Vidyut Bhavan, Vajpayee Layout, Jewargi Road, Kalaburagi-585102 **Ph:08472-221830**
Yadgir	**Sri. Sahadev B. Mankare** Superintending Engineer (El) O&M Circle, GESCOM Vidyut Bhavan, Vajpayee Layout, Jewargi Road, Kalaburagi-585102 **Mbl:9448359008**	**Sri. A.A.Dinesh** Deputy Controller of Accounts, O&M Circle, GESCOM, Vidyut Bhavan,Vajpayee Layout, Jewargi Road, Kalaburagi.-585102. **Mbl No. 9448482140**	**Sri. Shivakumar G Doddamani** Plot No. 18 & 19 Basaveshwara Nagar, Station area, Yadgir-585202 **Mbl No.-9886661005**	**Office of the Executive Engineer (El),** O&M Division, GESCOM Station Main Road Yadgir -585202 **Ph:08473-252376**
Bidar	**Sri. Sachin G.H** I/C Superintending Engineer (El) O&M Circle, GESCOM, Bidar-585401 **Mbl:9449597427**	**Sri Mallikarjun Shetkar** I/C Deputy Controller of Accounts, O&M Circle, GESCOM Bidar - 585401 **Mbl No.9449597439**	**Smt Lakshmi V Mugali W/o Sri. Veeresh** C/o Harish Computer Old Adarsh Colony, Near Railway Gate Bidar **Ph., 9591996002**	**Office of the Superintending Engineer (El),** O&M Circles, GESCOM, Bidar-585401 **Ph:-08482-221862/ 08482-222092**
Raichur	**Sri. Chandrashekar Desai** I/c Superintending Engineer (El) O&M Circle, GESCOM Near Basaveshwara Circle Opp. LIC Office, Raichur-584101. **Mbl:9449597428**	**Sri. N. Ganesh** I/C Deputy Controller of Accounts, O&M Circle, GESCOM, Near Basaveshwara Circle Opp. LIC Office, Raichur-584101. **Mbl No. 9448999434**	**Sri. Indudhar M Patil** House No. 1-12-30 Daddy Colony Raichur Ph. **9449019345**	**Office of the Superintending Engineer (El),** O&M Circle,GESCOM Near Basaveshwara Circle Opp. LIC Office Raichur-584101. **Ph:-08532-226416**
Koppal	**Sri. M.Rajesh** I/C Superintending Engineer (El) O&M Koppala Circle GESCOM. Koppal-583233 **Mobl No. 9483043701**	**Sri. Immanuel Joseph Paul** Deputy Controller of Accounts O&M Koppala Circle GESCOM. Koppal-583233 **Mbl No. 9483043716**	**Sri. Basavaraj V Ballolli,** M/s V.V Ballolli & Sons Roller Flour Mills, Kataraki Road, Koppala-583131. **Mbl: 9845333445**	**Office of the Superintending Engineer (El)** O&M Koppala circle GESCOM. Koppal-583233. **Ph:-08539-270276**
Ballari	**Sri. B Venkateshulu** Superintending Engineer (El), O&M Circle, GESCOM Behind BUDA Office, Moti Circle, Ballari-583101 **Mob No: 9448359009**	**Sri. S.B.Anand** Deputy Controller of Accounts O&M Circle, GESCOM, Behind BUDA Office, Moti Circle Ballari-583101 **Mbl No. 9448482142**	**Sri K.C Suresh Babu, S/o K. C. Honnur Swamy** House No. 88, Ward No. 5, Kakaria Thota, Behind Anjaneya Swamy Temple Ballari- 583101. **Mob No. 9342601064**	**Office of the Superintending Engineer (El),** O&M Circle GESCOM, Behind BUDA Office, Moti Circle, Ballari-583101 **Ph: -08392-274083**

Any Complainant, who is aggrieved by the order passed by the Forum may himself or through his representative make a representation in Form-B within 30 days from the date of receipt of the order of the Forum at the below mentioned address.

Address, Phone No. and E-mail details of Electricity Ombudsman

The Electricity Ombudsman, Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission
#16-C-1, Miller Tank Bed Area, Behind Ambedkar Bhavan, Vasanthanagar, Bengaluru -560052
Ph. No. 080- 41692617 E-mail : ombkar@gmail.com

Note: Form-A & Form-B are available at CGRF Head Quarter and on GESCOM Website:**https://gescom.karnataka.gov.in**

DIP/Kalaburagi/259/MC&A/2022-23

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Operations),
Corporate Office, GESCOM, Kalaburagi

DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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JULY 21, 2022, 5 PM (IST)

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- To seek novel methods for identifying viable adult filarial worms in the human body, i.e., the absence of signal must indicate the worms are either not present, dead or Permanently sterilized (as would be needed for stopping decisions).
- Identifying new methods specific for early exposure or pre-patent infection of LF causative species (as would be needed for surveillance).

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Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council
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First Floor, MTNL Building, 9, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003
www.birac.nic.in
GCI-BIRAC website: www.birac.nic.in/grandchallengesindia
Telephone: +91-1124389600

For Enquiries
Please Email:
Mission Director, GCI-BIRAC at
mdpmubmgf@birac.nic.in,
pmubmgf@birac.nic.in,
pmubmgf5@birac.nic.in
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Please visit the BIRAC website at **www.birac.nic.in** and follow the link to the ONLINE registration and submission portal.

THE HINDU
Text & Context

ABSTRACT

Brain networks and nicotine addiction

A study of patients who quit smoking spontaneously reveals brain networks that are associated with alcohol and other forms of addiction

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

Joutsa, J., Moussawi, K., Siddiqi, S.H. et al. Brain lesions disrupting addiction map to a common human brain circuit. Nat Med (2022). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-022-01834-y

THE GIST

- Substance use is a term in common parlance that includes use of a range of products, including psychoactive drugs. While not all of these are addictive, substance use disorders are a major health hazard.
- A study published in Nature Medicine tries to identify the network of regions in the brain that are involved in substance addiction. The study finds that brain lesions that lead to spontaneous remission of tobacco addiction in people affect a part of a common brain network.
- Additionally they found this network was reproducible in the case of other substances of abuse, in independent groups of people with lesions.

By studying brain scans of human patients who incurred lesions in their brains after an accident, and then spontaneously quit smoking, researchers map out the brain networks associated with addiction. The study published in *Nature Medicine* sheds light on areas of the brain that can be used as target for modulation and therapy for addiction to nicotine or alcohol. The authors of the paper caution that more larger studies need to be done to ascertain what side effects such modulation and therapy will produce.

The harms of substance abuse

Substance use is a term in common parlance that includes the use of a range of products, including psychoactive drugs. Psychoactive drugs are substances which when taken or administered into the system cause an alteration in mental processes, such as perception, consciousness, cognition and mood or emotions. Psychoactive drugs include alcohol and nicotine. While not all of these are addictive, substance use disorders are a major health hazard. They affect 8-10% of adult population and are a leading cause of death. Hence there is an interest in understanding how to treat addictions and substance use disorders.

Among these, tobacco alone is a major factor, and the data on tobacco use is grim. India is the second largest consumer of tobacco. According to the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (2016-17) nearly 267 million adults (15 years and above) in India, which is about 29% of India's adult population, use tobacco in some form or the other. To add one more datapoint to this, about 8 million people annually die because of tobacco use – that is nearly half the people who use it – and of this, over 7 million are primary users and around 1.2 million are non-smokers exposed to tobacco in a passive manner.

New methods of substance abuse treatment try modulating specific parts of the brain which are believed to be implicated in addiction

Treatment for substance use disorders are inadequate and do not show promise in the long term. New methods of treatment try modulating specific parts of the brain which are believed to be implicated in addiction. Now, a study published in *Nature Medicine* tries to identify the network of regions in the brain that are involved in substance addiction. The study finds that brain lesions that lead to spontaneous remission of tobacco addiction in people affect a part of a common brain network. Further, they find evidence of commonality of this network across different substance addictions and this seems to suggest new targets for neuromodulation therapies.

Brain circuits, not regions

The researchers studied the brain scans of 129 patients addicted to smoking at the time they suffered localised brain damage. Of these, 60% were male and their average age was 56 years. Of the 129, 34 patients experienced spontaneous addiction remission following the injury. That is, they were able to quit smoking without experiencing craving or relapse. They also show that though the lesions associated with remission occurred in many different places in the brain, these can be mapped to a specific brain network. Additionally they found this network was reproducible in the case of other substances of abuse, in independent groups of people with lesions. These included people with reduced risk of alcohol addiction and case reports of lesions that disrupted addiction to substances other than nicotine.

Broadly speaking, the authors found that brain circuits rather than specific brain regions may be involved in causing addiction, and damage to these circuits – whatever the reason –may result in remission. Common areas were found for alcohol and tobacco addiction. "These results did not correlate with psychological tests which indicates that anatomical rather than behavioural factors may be involved," says Dr. Smita Deshpande who is a professor of psychiatry at St. John's Research Institute, St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, in Bengaluru.

Dr. Deshpande also points out that the authors have measured alcohol dependence by a questionnaire which did not actually mean that those people were alcohol dependent. "They also did not look at issues such as degree of recovery, ability to function in daily life, family support, occupational factors and psychological factors other than those described in the paper," she says. It is also not specified for how long the patients studied had quit smoking (remained free of nicotine), "as relapses are common in all addictions."

THE DAILY QUIZ

Here's a quiz on famous speeches from history

1 Delivered in 1963, this speech has a well-known refrain that symbolises the soul of the civil rights movement in America. Although its title has many origins, it is believed that towards the end of its delivery, someone shouted to the speaker from the crowd, "Tell them about the dream, Martin." Name the speech and the speaker.

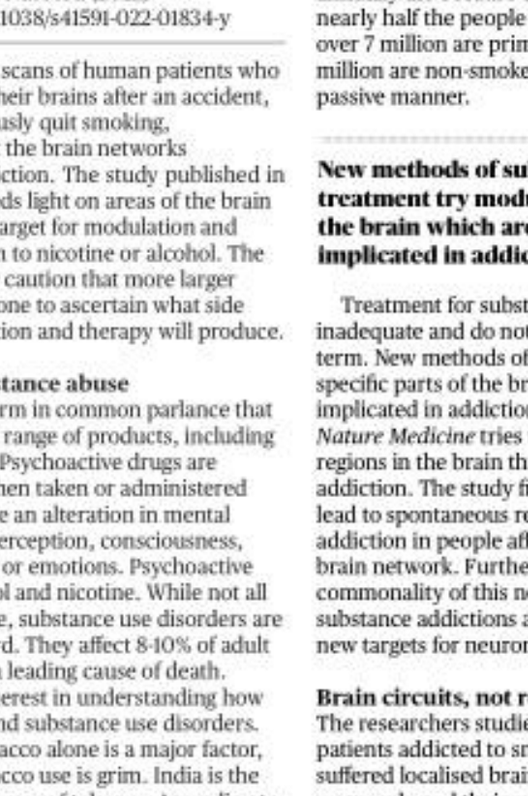
2 Name this philosopher whose most famous speech was delivered at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893, and began with the words "Sisters and brothers of America..."

3 This inspirational slogan was mentioned by Apple co-founder Steve Jobs in 2005 in his Stanford commencement address. The slogan is today associated with Jobs' legacy and his vision for Apple. Name the slogan.

4 The Gettysburg Address, delivered in 1863 by Abraham Lincoln, contains a line that is often cited today as the definition of democracy. Identify this timeless sentence, which conveys that in a democracy, the citizens of the country elect the government to rule the country and the elected government works for the welfare of the people.

5 This sporting legend earned many of baseball's top honours and awards before passing away at 37 after a brief battle with ALS. Name this baseball player, who lends his name to ALS.

6 The following are words from the inaugural address of which President of the U.S.? "And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country."



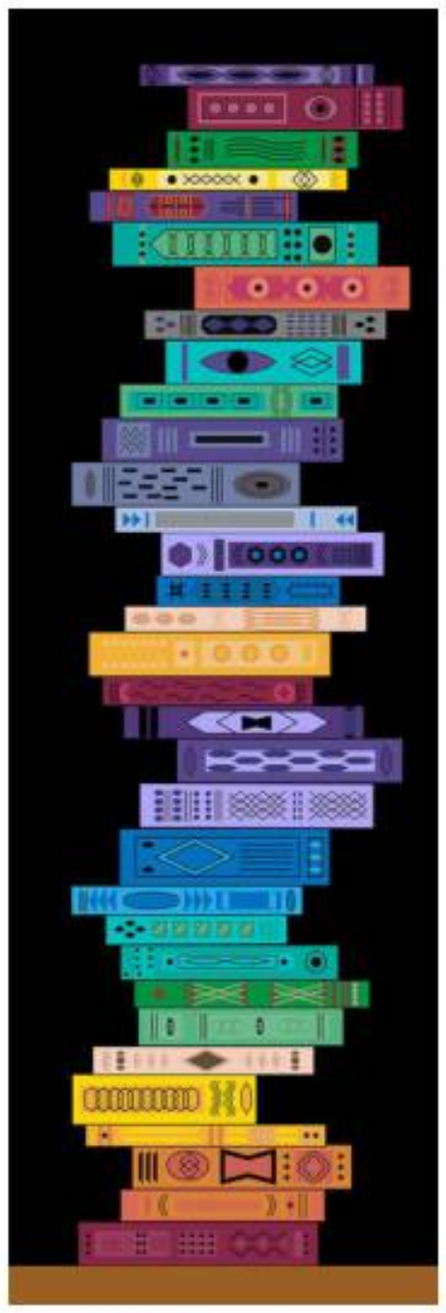
◄ In this still from the war film *Darkest Hour* (2017), Gary Oldman is seen portraying a British leader known for delivering the speech 'Blood, toil, tears and sweat'. Identify the leader.

Please send in your answers to the **dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in**

Questions (abridged) and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The name of the Visegrád Group can be traced back to this event in world history. **Ans: 1335 Congress of Visegrád**
2. This term is used to refer to the eastern part of the Arab world. There is a companion term to this term which is used to refer to the western part of North Africa. **Ans: Mashrek, Maghreb**
3. The Central American Integration System was formed with the signing of this protocol. It is also called by this name. **Ans: Protocol of Tegucigalpa, Guatemala Protocol**
4. The New Development Bank has four more members apart from the five founding states. **Ans: Bangladesh, the UAE, Uruguay, Egypt**
5. The only writer who has received the SAARC Literary Award award twice. **Ans: Suman Pokhrel**
6. The legally binding agreement signed in 2002 by the member states of the ASEAN to reduce haze pollution. **Ans: ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution**
7. The North American Free Trade Agreement has been replaced by this agreement. **Ans: United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement**
8. Mercosur is a portmanteau of this Spanish word. **Ans: Mercado Común del Sur, which means Common Market of the South**
Visual: Identify this international agency with the help of the logo. **Ans: The Universal Postal Union established through the Treaty of Bern. World Post Day is observed every year to commemorate this establishment.**

Early Birds: Mahima Srivastava| Sarbrinder Singh| Bipin Arya|

Compiled by: Ranjani Srinivasan



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

Good morning, sir".

"Good morning".

"What's the difference between 'respectfully' and 'respectively', sir?"

" 'Respectfully' means 'full of respect', 'in a courteous manner'.

He spoke to him respectfully.

'Respectively' refers to the order of items in a series.

Rama and Sridhar brought mangoes and oranges respectively.

This means that Rama brought mangoes and Sridhar brought oranges.

Krishna and John have their offices in Perambur and Mylapore respectively.

This means that Krishna's office is in Perambur and John's office is in Mylapore".

"Is there any difference between 'angry at' and 'angry with', sir?"

"Yes. You get angry with people.

Ram is angry with her.

They are angry with John.

You are angry at what someone says.

He was angry at the way the meeting was conducted.

They were angry at the way she spoke.

You are angry at situations and angry with people".

"What is the difference between 'reconciled to' and 'reconciled with', sir?"

"You try to reconcile with another when there is a dispute. You don't want to quarrel for ever. You may decide to live in harmony with him. Then you use 'reconcile with'.

She stayed away from her husband for several months. Now she is reconciled with him and is staying with him.

When you can't do anything about an unpleasant situation, you learn to live with it. Then you say 'I am reconciled to the situation'. 'Reconciled to' means 'resigned to'. The situation is such that you must reconcile yourself to it. When you reconcile with someone, harmony is restored. When you say you are reconciled to something, it means you have to put up with something disagreeable or unpleasant".

"What is the difference between 'historical' and 'historic', sir?"

"Historic means 'momentous' or 'important in the frame-work of history'.

It was a historic occasion.

It was a historic speech.

It is a historic building.

A historic occasion is an important occasion that will go down in the annals of history. 'Historical' means 'pertaining to history'.

Is it historically true?

It is a historical novel.

A historical novel is based on history. What is historical may not be historic; what is historic is part of history".

"How do you pronounce the second syllable 'et' in 'bucket', sir?"

"It is pronounced as 'it'. It's the same in 'ticket' also. Well, let's stop here. Goodbye".

"Thank you, sir. Goodbye".

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

BBMP will restart Onti Mane scheme, says CM

'It was unfortunately discontinued during the pandemic'

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai announced that the Onti Mane scheme, where the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) gave financial assistance to the poor to build a house if they owned their own site, will soon be restarted.

"The scheme that helped the poor and oppressed communities build their own homes was unfortunately discontinued during the pandemic. We will restart the scheme and I will issue a formal order over the same soon," Mr. Bommai said, after he inaugurated and laid foundation stones for a slew of development works in Chickpet. He said a quota will soon be fixed on the number of beneficiaries per ward in the city.

The Chief Minister also said that the government had taken up all measures to implement the Akrama-Sakrama scheme to regularise revenue pockets in the city, where it was the poor who had mostly bought properties. "We have submitted all necessary documents to the Supreme Court, where a case in this regard is pending. Once the legal hurdles are cleared, these revenue pockets will be regularised and comprehensive development works will be taken up," he said.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai inaugurating a waterway project in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

Mr. Bommai inspected the ongoing works of 'K-100', a project that would beautify and reinvent storm-water drains over a stretch of 24 km into a public space. "It was part of former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa's Mission 2022. In three months' time, the first phase will be inaugurated and I will get Mr. Yediyurappa only to inaugurate it," he said.

He also threw open the rejuvenated Byrasandra Lake and laid foundation stones for a multi-level car parking in Gandhi Bazaar and a multi-storey housing project for the poor in K.R. Market.

He also said that the sub-urban rail, for which Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay foundation stone for on June 20, and the Peripheral Ring Road project, for which the State government had already called tenders, would decongest the city.

11-year-old working as domestic help rescued from apartment

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

In a joint operation, members of Childline, along with officials of the Labour Department, rescued a 11-year-old girl working as a domestic help at the apartment of a garment factory owner in Yemlur recently.

The victim, who hailed from Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh, is the daughter of a labourer couple and was working as the domestic help for the last one month at the house of Rajesh Bhatija, according to the police. Inquiries revealed that the victim was working from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. without a holiday and was offered ₹5,000.

Based on a tip-off from Childline, the officials raided the apartment and rescued the girl and booked Rajesh Bhatija under various sections of the JJ Act and the Child Labour Act.

B.N. Manjunath, senior Labour inspector, filed a complaint against Rajesh Bhatija. The victim was sent to the State Home for Girls and the parents were summoned. The parents reportedly said they they voluntarily handed over their daughter to Rajesh Bhatija for her better prospects.

Bike theft: Man held

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Byadarahalli police on Wednesday arrested a 23-year-old man and recovered three bikes and a goods vehicle worth ₹2.7 lakh from him.

The accused had been identified as Rajashekhar. The police said that he and his associates would move around to identify vehicles parked outside houses and steal them.

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Precautionary Measures to Prevent
Acute Gastroenteritis/ Cholera

Acute Gastroenteritis/Cholera cases are reported every year and may increase during summer. Recently, due to heavy rains, chances of drinking water contamination could be there. The Public are hereby requested to take the below mentioned precautionary measures (Do's & Don'ts) to avoid spreading of the disease to other areas.

Things to be done
- Always drink Boiled & Cooled Water
- Public Taps and Places to be kept clean
- Fresh Food to be consumed
- Before eating, hands to be washed cleanly by soap & water
- Clean your Hands with soap after using the toilet
- The Food prepared needs to be covered always so that the ants, insects do not sit on it
- Keep your Home and surrounding Environment clean
- Every 15 days clean your drinking water storage tanks with Bleaching Powder

Things to be avoided
- Do not drink water from dirty taps
- Avoid consumption of road side unhygienic eatables / cut fruits
- The Food items which have been exposed to dust, flies, insects need to be avoided
- Waste should not be thrown on road side, foot path and drainages as it attracts the insects and may lead to Acute Gastroenteritis

If there are symptoms of Vomiting, Loose motion, please contact your nearest Health Centre.

For More Information Contact the following Phone No's:
Health Officer (East) 080 22975852 | Health Officer (South) 080 22975750 | Health Officer (West) 080 22975650
Health Officer (Mahadevapura) 080 28512301 | Health Officer (Bommanahalli) 080 25732447 | Health Officer (Rajarajeshwarinagar) 080 28600208
Health Officer (Yelahanka) 080 22975936 | Health Officer (Dasarahalli) 080 28396833 | Control Room: 080-22660000, 22221188.
TOLL FREE No.: 1533

"To try and achieve the Progress in all Personal and Collective activities it is the duty of each & every Indian Citizen to abide as per the Indian Constitutional Basic Rights"
Rakesh Singh, I.A.S., Administrator, BBMP
Tushar Giri Nath, I.A.S., Chief Commissioner, BBMP

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Computer Science & Engineering		✓	✓	
Computer Science & Engineering (AI & ML)	✓			
Cyber Security			✓	
Cybersecurity Systems & Networks	✓			
Data Science			✓	
Data Sciences		✓		
Defence Technology			✓	
Embedded Systems		✓	✓	
Engineering Design			✓	
Geoinformatics & Earth Observation	✓			
Manufacturing Engineering			✓	
Materials Science & Engineering			✓	
Mechatronics	✓			
Molecular Medicine				✓
Nano Biotechnology				✓
Nano Electronics & Nano Engineering*				✓
Power & Energy (Smart Grids & Electric Vehicles)	✓			
Power Electronics & Drives			✓	✓
Renewable Energy Technologies				✓
Robotics & Automation	✓			
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Education for Life. Education for Living.

Government of Kerala is initiating proactive steps to diagnose, treat and manage children identified with Spinal Muscular Atrophy. Parents of children affected by SMA are requested to apply for treatment assistance in the prescribed format given in the website of Arogyakeralam (arogyakeralam.gov.in) and Dept. of Health Services (dhs.kerala.gov.in).

Filled-in applications can be sent to State Nodal Officer, Child Health, Office of SMD, DHS Compound, Thiruvananthapuram. Pin. 695035 as registered post or scan and mail to ch.nhm@kerala.gov.in

172 applications have been received by Govt. seeking treatment assistance so far. Treatment expense will range from 24 lakhs to 72 lakhs per child. Inorder to facilitate expert medical treatment to said children and support this noble inititative, donations are solicited from generous and broad-minded people across the country.

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GOVERNMENT OF KERALA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, JUN. 16
RISE 05:54 SET 18:47
RISE 21:02 SET 07:34

FRIDAY, JUN. 17
RISE 05:54 SET 18:47
RISE 22:00 SET 08:41

SATURDAY, JUN. 18
RISE 05:54 SET 18:47
RISE 22:52 SET 09:46

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	23
Mysuru	30	20
Bengaluru	28	20

Bengaluru Today
30°C A slight warm and humid weather to prevail. Night will be pleasant. Spell of rain and thundershower will occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
30°C The weather will be slight warm and humid. Night will be pleasant. Chances of light rain and thundershower at some places.

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THE HINDU
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CET to begin today; exam centres to be videographed

2,16,525 candidates have registered for the test

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Common Entrance Test (CET) – the gateway to becoming eligible for seeking entry into professional courses in the State – will be held from June 16 to 18. This will pave the way to seek admission into Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary, Pharmacy and other courses. C.N. Ashwath Narayan, Minister for Higher Education, said here on Wednesday that this year, exam centres will be videographed.

"A total of 2,16,525 candidates have registered for CET-2022. The examination will be conducted in 486 centers across the State, out of which 87 centers are located in Bengaluru and 399 centres in other places," he said.

Staff members of Canara College busy preparing for the CET exams in Mangaluru on Wednesday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

While exams for Biology (morning) and Math (afternoon) are scheduled on Thursday, Physics (morning) and Chemistry (afternoon) will be held on Friday. Kannada language test will be conducted for Horanadu and Gadinadu Kannadiga candidates at Bidar, Belagavi, Vijayapura, Ballari, Mangaluru, and Bengaluru centers on Saturday. A total of 1,708 candidates have registered to write the Kannada language test.

"As many as 486 observers (Assistant Commissioner cadre), 972 Special Invigilation Squad Members, 486 Custodians, and 9,600 invigilators and a total of 20,483 officers have been deployed to discharge examination duties," the Minister stated.

The candidates will not be allowed to wear, carry any type of wristwatch to the examination hall/room. They should not carry any tablet/mobile/calculator to the examination hall. Candidates are advised to follow the timetable for the schedule of bell timings and reach the examination centre at least half an hour before the first bell, he added.

For details of instructions, visit http://kea.kar.nic.in.

COMEDK UG Entrance Test to be held on Sunday

Instructions to candidates

- Candidates should reach examination centre as per reporting time mentioned in test admission ticket
- Carry test admission ticket along with two recent passport size colour photographs
- Candidates are required to carry a mask, gloves, transparent water bottle, sanitizer (50 ml) along with exam-related documents
- Since this is an all-India level examination, the dress code for the COMEDK 2022 exam will be in line with what is advocated by the respective State government. However, full sleeves dress/shirt and any dress material covering the ears and head is prohibited to prevent malpractices

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

COMEDK is conducting its 'UGET and Uni-GAUAGE E-2022' entrance test on Sunday all over India for UG courses in engineering for colleges in Karnataka and select PAN India member universities.

230 centres

The examination will be computer-based (online) and held across 230 test centres in 154 cities across the country in two sessions. While the morning session will be held from 9 a.m. to noon, the afternoon session will be held from 2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

This year, 61,635 candidates have enrolled for 'UGET and Uni-GAUAGE E-2022' test all over India.

CORRECTION OF NAME

I, Yashoda Guheshwara Prabhu W/o Guheshwara Prabhu S.P. R/a No.20/1, Mallikarjuna Nilaya, Kanakapura Road, Basavanagudi , Bengaluru 560004, do here by solemnly affirm and state on oath as that in my Passport my name is inadvertently recorded as Yashodha Guheshwara Prabhu but my true, correct & continue my name as **Yashoda Guheshwara Prabhu (New name)** only in all my future records, deeds, writings, proceedings, transactions private as well as upon all occasions whatsoever vide affidavit sworn before Advocate and Notary Hegde Ganapati Venkataraman on Date: 14.06.2022.

Doctor falls to death from 11th floor of apartment

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A 32-year-old doctor working in Victoria Hospital in Bengaluru died after falling from the 11th floor of his residential apartment at Amruthalli on June 15.

The deceased, Pruthvikanth Reddy, is a native of Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh. He got married three months ago and the couple moved to Godrej apartments.

Police shifted the body for post-mortem while initiating an investigation to ascertain the cause of death.

Dr. Reddy was suffering from health problems, police said.

The Hindu Education Plus Career Counselling from June 25

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The 20th edition of The Hindu Education Plus Career Counselling 2022 Karnataka will be held at 10 locations in nine cities in June and July. The event will cover topics like CET, COMEDK, NEET, general education (offbeat courses), Law, Pure Science, Arts, Science & Commerce, Management, PGDM, Engineering & Medicine. The event sets a benchmark in educational and professional guidance. It acts as a platform to connect students and parents with speakers and educational institutions. It also helps students to take the right decisions after getting the necessary counselling and guidance.

Schedule

Place	Date
Bengaluru North	June 25
Mangaluru	June 25
Kalaburagi	June 25
Tumakuru	June 26
Bidar	June 26
Bengaluru South	July 2
Hubballi	July 2
Ballari	July 3
Mysuru	July 3
Davangere	July 3

Police on the lookout for Union Minister's fake PA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Sanjaynagar police are stepping up investigation to track down a man who, posing as the PA of Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shobha Karandlaje, was allegedly cheating people in Tamil Nadu.

Based on a complaint filed by Varun Aditya B.S., personal assistant of Ms. Karandlaje, the police on Monday registered a cheating and impersonation case against the accused, identified as Prakash.

In his complaint, Mr. Aditya said that Prakash has been operating in Ooty and many parts of Tamil Nadu for the last the three months, cheating landowners, farmers, and businessmen offering official favours.

The fraud came to light when one of the victims called Ms. Karandlaje's office after he failed to contact Prakash. Mr. Aditya gave the mobile number which the accused was using to the police for further investigation.

CID arrests PSI involved in recruitment scam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) probing the PSI recruitment scam has arrested K. Harish, PSI with the Byadarahalli police station, for his alleged role in being the middleman between the candidates and the kingpins.

The CID has so far arrested 60 persons, including candidates, police personnel, and the staff of the examination centres deployed in Bengaluru and Kalaburagi.

Harish is a 2018 batch recruit working at the Byadarahalli police station for the last one year. He was arrested based on the confession of a candidates, who had secured the highest marks to become one of the toppers.

Harish introduced the candidates to a kingpin and helped to finalise the deal, which, according to the source, was fixed for ₹60 lakh. Harish also told him that he got selected through this network and the CID officials are now probing this angle too.

Investigation by the CID revealed that the scam occurred at different levels: from use of bluetooth to tampering OMR sheets, seating arrangements etc.

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **ASIF** Ahmed S/o Mohammed Shariff residing at No.55, Ex-Serviceman Layout, RK Hegde Nagar, Bengaluru-560077 have changed my name to Asif Ahmed Jaffer Shariff vide affidavit dated 14-06-2022 before S. Samuel Solomon, Notary, Bengaluru.

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF HON'BLE CITY CIVIL JUDGE, MAYOHALL AT BENGALURU (CH- 21)
O.S. No. 25494/2021
BETWEEN
M/s. ICICI BANK LTD.
Having its branch office at 4/10, Mythree Tower, Bommanahalli Hosur Main Road, Bangalore-560068 And represented by its Collection Manager
Mr. Pramodh G. ...PLAINTIFF
And
Mr. SYED MOHIDDIN RIYAZ and Another ...DEFENDANTS
SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT
1. Mr. SYED MOHIDDIN RIYAZ S/o. Syed Abdul Rahman, Aged About 62 Years, No.43, Eden Crest Apartments, Flat No. 303, Viviani Road, Richards Park, Richards Town, Bangalore-560005
2. Mrs. FATHIMA RIYAZ W/o. Syed Mohiddin Riyaz, Aged About 50 Years, No.43, Eden Crest Apartments, Flat No. 303, Viviani Road, Richards Park, Richards Town, Bangalore North, Frazer Town, Bangalore-560005
...DEFENDANTS
WHEREAS the Plaintiff has instituted the above proceedings against you seeking recovery of Rs.6,45,248.91/- as on 26/03/2021 along with interest 24% P.A. and other consequential reliefs. You are hereby summoned to appear before the **Hon'ble City Civil Judge, Mayohall At Bangalore** [CH- 21] in person or by a pleader duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to the above proceedings on **25/07/2022** at **11:00 A.M.** take notice that in default of your appearance on the day mentioned before the suit will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and seal of this court, this 26th day of May 2022.
By order of this Hon'ble Court
Asst. Deputy Registrar
City Civil Court
Mayohall, Bengaluru
Advocate for Plaintiff
ANVAYA LAW, ADVOCATES AND CONSULTANTS, First Floor, India Express Building No.1, Queens Road
Bengaluru- 560001
Cell No. 9845806822
vasudevan.hn@anvayalaw.com

PERSONAL

THANKSGIVING

Gratitude to Lord
• M.Sainath and Family

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDL. CITY CIVIL JUDGE, MAYOHALL UNIT AT BANGALORE (CCH-75)
O.S. No. 25542/2022
Between:
ICICI Bank Limited,
Having its Registered office at Landmark, Race Course Circle, Vadodara- 390007 and having its Corporate office at ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai- 400051 and its Branch office at Mystree Centre, # 4/10, Hosur Road, Bommanahalli, Bangalore-560067 ...Plaintiff
And
Sri. Sridhara G ...Defendant
SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT
To,
Sri. Sridhara G
S/o. Sri. Muninanjappa, No. 03, 1st Floor, 2nd Cross, 4th Stage, 4th Phase, Santhosh Nagar, Attur Layout, Behind Blue Bell School, Yelahanka New Town, Bangalore-560 064
WHEREAS the Plaintiff has instituted above said suit against you for recovery of Rs.12,78,527/- (Rupees Twelve Lakh Seventy Eight Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Seven Only) together with interest @ 24% p.a., cost of the suit and to grant such other or further order relief. The above mentioned Defendant hereby summoned to appear before the Hon'ble Additional City Civil & Sessions Judge (CCH-75) in person or through a Counsel who can able to answer the claim made against you on 25.07.2022 at 11.00 a.m. failing which the suit is heard and disposed ex-parte.
Given under my hand and seal of the Hon'ble court on this 04.06.2022
By Order of the Hon'ble Court
Deputy Registrar
City Civil Court
Mayohall Unit, Bangalore
Advocate for Plaintiff
S. A. Associates,
No.10, 7th Cross,
Victoria Layout,
Bangalore- 560047

TENDERS

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TENDER NOTICE
E-Tenders are invited (https://etenders.kerala.gov.in) for the supply of 2.40 Crores nos Petbottles (Tender id 2022_TSC_494917_1) for the period 01.07.2022 to 30.06.2023 & supply and installation of digital Flow Meter (Tender ID. 2022_TSC_494943_1).The last date of submission is 22.06.2022 at 3.00 pm. Contact office /website.
Thiruvalla,14.06.2022 (sd/-)GM

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE LXVIII ADDITIONAL CITY CIVIL & SESSIONS JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-69)
O.S NO. 2448/2021
Between:
M/s. ICICI Bank Limited, having its registered office at: Landmark, Race-Course Circle, Vadodara-390007, having its head office at M/s. ICICI Bank Ltd., No.1, Shobha Pearl, 2nd Floor, MG Road, Commissariat Road, Bangalore-560025, and branch office at: 4/10, Mythree tower, Bommanahalli, Hosur Main Road, Bengaluru- 560068 through its Authorised representative.
Mr. Pramodh G ...Plaintiff
And:
Mr. Aneesur Shaik Rasheed ...Defendant
SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION UNDER ORDER V RULE 20 OF CPC
Defendant:
1. Mr. Aneesur Shaik Rasheed,
S/o. Afsar S.A.R, Aged about 33 Years, R/at No. 58, 9th A/2nd Main, Near Shifaa Medical, BTM 1st Stage, Bangalore- 560029.
Whereas the plaintiff above named has instituted the above suit for recovery of money for sum of Rs. 13,22,960/- along with interest at the rate of 24% P.A. against you, and you are summoned to appear before the LXVIII Addl. City Civil & Sessions, Judge at Bengaluru (C.C.H-69), in person or by a pleader, on the day of 02/07/2022 at 11:00 AM to answer the claim, failing to which the suit would be disposed of Ex-Parte.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on this the 8th day of June 2022 at Bangalore.
By order of this
Assistant Registrar,
Hon'ble City Civil Court,
Bengaluru
Advocate for Plaintiff
B.S. Jeevan Kumar Vidhii Partners, Advocates, No. 701, Queens Corner 'A', #3, Queens Road, Bengaluru -01.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice is issued on behalf of My client **Smt.N.Yashoda W/o Sri.Hanumanthaiah** to bring the notice of the general public that the **original registered absolute sale deed, bearing Doc.No.KEN-1-03878/2006-07 of Book-I**, stored in CD No.KEND285, dated.03.05.2006, registered in the office of the sub-register, Kengeri, Bangalore, executed by Sri.G.Narayanappa s/o Guttaiah & others in favour of Smt.M.Yashoda W/o Sri.Hanumanthaiah and original Katha and Tax paid receipts are missing / lost/ misplaced in respect of schedule property.
If any person/s, firm, company, institution or organization has any claim are holding the afore mentioned document, they may contact the undersigned in writing within **7 days** from the date of this notice failing which it will be presumed that there are no claims.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All the piece and parcel of the residential property bearing **Site.No.3**, Gonipura Village Katha No.71/1, measuring east to west 30ft and north to south 40ft, situated at **Gonipura Village, Kengeri Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk**, now comes under the Limits of K.Gollahalli Gramapanchayathi, Bangalore and bounded by:
East by : Site No.6,
West by : Site No.4,
North by : 25 feet Road,
South by : Property of Baiyappa.
H. Prahlada, Advocate & Solicitor,
For H.P.Law, #2, 3rd Floor, Venkateshwara Complex, Yeshwanthpur, Bangalore-560022
M : 7760051073

PUBLIC NOTICE

(LOSS OF ORIGINAL GIFT DEED DT. 12.04.2013)
This is to inform the general public that the client of the undersigned informed that they lost / misplaced the Original registered Gift Deed dated 12.04.2013 bearing Document No. HLS-1-00202-2013-14, stored in C.D. No. HLSD72, in the Office of Sub-Registrar, Ulsoor, Bangalore, in respect of Property bearing Site No.76 measuring 5490 Sq.Ft., Site No.77 measuring 5198 Sq.Ft., Site No.78 measuring 4739 Sq.Ft., all having H.L. Khatha No.158/123/1, in the layout "FERNS MEADOWS", situated at Billishivale Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, presently Bangalore East Taluk (earlier Bangalore South Taluk), registered in the names of Ms. CASTELINO NATASHA MARA and Ms. CASTELINO SHANAYA KESHINI. A proper information / complaint has been lodged with the jurisdictional Police Station. It is hereby requested to the general public, to hand over the aforesaid document to the undersigned in the event they find the same, and will be suitably rewarded.
UNNI KRISHNAN. M, Advocate
46, 1st 'A' Cross, AECS Layout Road, (Near ISRO), RMV II Stage, Bengaluru-560094. Mob: 9844138209
Date: 15.06.2022

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice
For and on behalf of the President of India, **Chief Administrative Officer (Const.)**, 5th Floor, North Western Railway Headquater office, Near Jawahar Circle, Jaipur-302017 (Rajasthan) invites Open tenders in sealed cover (**Two Packet System**) through Engineering, Procurement and Constrution (the "**EPC**") contract for the following works on prescribed form:- **1. RFP No. : Dy. CE/C/JU/JSM/01 2. Name of the work:** MAJOR UPGRADATION OF JAISALMR RAILWAY SATION OF JODHPUR DIVISION OF NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY on Engineering, Procurement and Constrution (EPC) mode. **3. Mode of Tender:** Single Stage, Two packet on EPC mode. **4. Estimated Project Cost:** Rs.**1,34,00,00,000.00** (Rupees One hundred Thirty four Crores only) **5. Bid Security:** Rs.**68,50,000.00** (Rs. Sixty eight lakhs, Fifty thousand only) **6. Construction Period:** 24 (Twenty-four) months **7. Pre-bid Conference Details:** Date: 30.06.2022 ; Time: 11:00 PM; Venue, 5th Floor, Headquarters Office, North-Western Railway, Jawahar Circle, Jaipur **8. Bid due date and time for On-line submission on E-procurement portal:** By [15:00 hrs] (IST) on 29.07.2022 **9. Physical submission of all documents:** 03.08.2022 up to 15:00 Hrs. at the office of Dy. Chief Engineer (Const.)-I, Harish Joshi Marg, Opp. DRM office, North Western Railway, Jodhpur-342001 **10. Date and Time of Opening of Bid:** At 16.00 hrs. (IST) on the 03.08.2022 at Dy. Chief Engineer (Const.)-I, Harish Joshi Marg, Opp. DRM office, North Western Railway, Jodhpur-342001 for opening of second packet containing Financial bid will be notified subsequently to those bidders whose Technical & Commercial bid is found acceptable. **11. Website particulars where complete details of E-tender can be seen:** www.ireps.gov.in **Note.** 1.0 No manual tenders will be accepted.
404-AC/22
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IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE PRINCIPAL DISTRICT AND SESSION JUDGE, BENGALURU RURAL DISTRICT, AT BENGALURU
Misc. Petition No. 31 of 2022
Petitioner: Godrej Tyson Foods Limited., A Company incorporated as per provisions of the Companies Act, 1956 and having its registered office at, Godrej One, 3rd Floor, Pirojsha Nagar, Eastern Express Highway, Vikhroli (East), Mumbai-400079, Maharashtra, India. Represented by its Authorized Signatory, Mr. Ravi Kumar Palthur
-V/s-
Respondents: Smt. H.S Sharadamma W/o Late H.S. Suryanarayana Rao, aged about 72 years, R/at, Doddahullur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Hoskote Taluk - 562 114, Bengalore Rural & Others
NOTICE ISSUED TO THE RESPONDENT NOS. 5 TO 15,17 TO 24, 32, 35 TO 60 UNDER ORDER V RULE 20 OF THE CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE, 1908
To, **Respondent No. 5: Smt. Narayanamma**, W/o late Venkataramanappa, aged about 84 years, **Respondent No. 6: Smt. Anjinamma**, D/o Late Venkataramanappa, aged about 65 years, **Respondent No. 7: Smt. Krishnamma**, D/o late Venkataramanappa, aged about 63 years, **Respondent No. 8: Sri. Devdas**, S/o late Venkataramanappa, aged about 61 years, **Respondent No. 9: Smt. Roopashree**, W/o Late Devaraju, aged about 40 years, **Respondent No. 10: Sri. Muniyappa**, S/o late Goniyappa, aged about 54 years, **Respondent No. 11: Sri. Muthyalamma**, D/o Muniyappa, aged about 23 years, **Respondent No. 12: Smt. Pushpalatha**, W/o late Venkatesha, aged about 34 years, **Respondent No. 13: Smt. Muniyamma**, D/o Late Goniyappa, aged about 25 years, **Respondent No. 14: Smt. Sharadamba**, D/o late Goniyappa, aged about 27 years, **Respondent No. 15: Sri. Ramanji**, S/o Sharadamba, aged about 54 years, **Respondent No. 17: Smt. Sarojamma**, D/o Sharadamba, aged about 50 years, **Respondent No. 18: Sri. Anjinappa**, S/o Late Goniyappa, aged about 56 years, **Respondent No. 19: Smt. Kumaramma**, W/o Anjinappa, aged about 52 years, **Respondent No. 20: Smt. Poojamma**, W/o Anjinappa, aged about 50 years, **Respondent No. 21: Smt. Anjinamma**, D/o Sri. Anjinappa, aged about 24 years, **Respondent No. 22: Smt. Renukamma**, D/o Anjinappa, aged about 25 years, **Respondent No. 23: Smt. Susheelamma**, D/o Anjinappa, aged about 21 years, **Respondent No. 24: Sri. Manjunatha**, S/o Anjinappa, aged about 20 years, **Respondent No. 32: Smt. Shobha**, D/o Nagarajappa, aged about 23 years, Respondent Nos. 5 to 15,17 to 24, & 32 are R/at Doddahullur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Hoskote Taluk - 562 112, Bangalore Rural. **Respondent No. 35: Sri. Poojappa**, D/o Late Doddamuniamma, aged about 23 years, **Respondent No. 36: Sri. Dasappa**, S/o late Doddamuniamma, aged about 80 years, **Respondent No. 37: Smt. Yellamma**, D/o late Doddamuniamma, aged about 77 years, **Respondent No. 38: Smt. Narayanamma**, D/o late Doddamuniamma, aged about 73 years, **Respondent No. 39: Sri. Sampangappa**, S/o late Doddamuniamma, aged about 70 years, **Respondent No. 40: Sri. Muniyappa**, S/o Pillaiah, aged about 54 years, **Respondent No. 41: Sri. Narayanaswamy**, S/o Pillaiah, aged about 52 years, **Respondent No. 42: Smt. Saraswathamma**, D/o late Avalagurappa, aged about 52 years, **Respondent No. 43: Sri. Muniyappa** S/o late Avalagurappa, aged about 50 years, **Respondent No. 44: Smt. Krishnamma**, D/o Muniyappa, aged about 28 years, **Respondent No. 45: Smt. Sarojamma**, D/o Muniyappa, aged about 26 years, **Respondent No. 46: Sri Ravikumar** S/o Muniyappa, aged about 24 years, **Respondent No. 47: Smt. Sakamma**, W/o Late Chikkamunishami, aged about 54 years, **Respondent No. 48: Sri. Narayanappa**, S/o late Avalagurappa, aged about 47 years, **Respondent No. 49: Smt. Susheelamma**, D/o Narayanappa, aged about 42 years, **Respondent No. 50: Sri. Muniraju**, S/o Narayanappa, aged about 40 years, **Respondent No. 51: Smt. Manjula**, D/o Narayanappa, aged about 38 years, **Respondent No. 52: Smt. Pooja Devi**, D/o Narayanappa, aged about 36 years, **Respondent No. 53: Sri. Ramaswamy**, S/o late Avalagurappa, aged about 45 years, **Respondent No. 54: Sri. Manjunatha**, S/o Ramaswamy, aged about 45 years, **Respondent No. 55: Sri. Anjinappa**, S/o Ramaswamy, aged about 42 years, **Respondent No. 56: Sri. Chinnba**, S/o late Avalagurappa, aged about 43 years, **Respondent No. 57: Smt. Sudha**, D/o Chinnba, aged about 40 years, **Respondent No. 58: Smt. Roopa**, D/o Chinnba, aged about 37 years, **Respondent No. 59: Sri. Sundar Raj**, S/o Chinnba, aged about 35 years, **Respondent No. 60: Sri Anjinappa** S/o Chinnba, aged about 32 years Respondent Nos. 36 to 60 are residents of Dodda Hulluru Village, Kasaba Hobli, Hosakote Taluk - 562 114, Bengaluru Rural.
WHEREAS, the Petitioner has instituted the above petition against you seeking for the following reliefs: a) Withdraw, transfer, and consolidate the proceedings in (i) O.S. No. 1081 of 2019 pending before Hon'ble I Addl. Senior Civil Judge, Bengaluru Rural, and (ii) O.S. No. 3 of 2020 pending before the Hon'ble I Addl Civil Judge and JMFC, Hosakote, to the Hon'ble Court of I Addl. Senior Civil Judge, Bengaluru Rural, at Bengaluru or any other subordinate Court as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit. **b)** Withdraw, transfer, and consolidate the proceedings in (i) O.S. 1082 of 2019, pending before Hon'ble I Addl Senior Civil Judge, Bengaluru Rural, (ii) O.S. 1083 of 2019 pending before Hon'ble I Addl Senior Civil Judge, Bengaluru Rural, (iii) O.S. No. 2 of 2020 pending before the Hon'ble Principal Civil Judge and JMFC, Hoskote, (iv) O.S. No. 4 of 2020 pending before the Hon'ble Principal Civil Judge and JMFC, Hoskote, and (v) O.S. No. 5 of 2020 pending before the Hon'ble I Addl Civil Judge and JMFC, Hoskote to the Hon'ble Court of I Addl Senior Civil Judge, Bengaluru Rural, at Bengaluru or any other subordinate Court as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit.
You are hereby summoned to appear before this Court on **30th day of June, 2022** at 11:00 AM in person or through an advocate/pleader to answer the same, failing which the petition will be disposed ex parte.
Given under my hand and seal of the Court on 08-06-2022.
By order of the Court, Chief Administrative Officer, District & Sessions Court, Bangalore Rural District, Bangalore.
Advocate for the Petitioner:
Mr. Manu Kulkarni
Poovayya & Co.,
Advocates & Solicitors
The Estate, Level four, No. 121, Dickenson Road, Bengaluru-560042.

Published by N. Ravi at Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act).
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'Two-dose vaccine mandate not needed in public areas'

TAC also recommends issue of advisory on completing vaccination course

AFSHAN YASMEEN
BENGALURU

Following a letter by Karnataka Chief Secretary on June 7 seeking an opinion regarding the enforcement of two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine mandate for access to public areas, the State's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has recommended that there is no need to enforce the mandate in the current epidemiological situation of COVID-19 in Karnataka.

A health worker administering the COVID-19 vaccine at a PHC near Town Hall in Bengaluru. • FILE PHOTO

The TAC has instead recommended the issue of an advisory on completing the course of vaccination and having the certificate. This is based on the recent Supreme Court order that said restrictions on unvaccinated individuals imposed through various vaccine mandates by State Governments and Union Territories should be done away with.

The order dated May 2, 2022, had noted that emerging scientific opinion appears to indicate that the risk of transmission of the virus from unvaccinated individuals is almost on a par with that from vaccinated persons.

TAC chairman M.K. Sudarshan told *The Hindu* that the government had sought the TAC's opinion following a clarification sought by an activist in the wake of the Supreme Court order. On January 5, then Chief Secretary P. Ravi Kumar, had issued an order directing the Labour and Health Departments to ensure all employees working in various industries and factories, including the IT sector, should compulsorily be double dose vaccinated. Subsequently, double dose vaccination was made mandatory for access to public areas such as malls, shopping complexes and cinemas among others under the Disaster Management Act.

"After studying the Supreme Court order in detail, we have recommended that there is no need to enforce the vaccine mandate now," the TAC chairman said.

"Till the infection rate remains low and any new development or research finding emerges which provides due justification to impose reasonable and proportionate restrictions on the rights of unvaccinated individuals, we suggest that all authorities in this country, including private organisations and educational institutions, review the relevant orders and instructions imposing restrictions on unvaccinated individuals in terms of access to public places, services and resources, if not already recalled," stated the Supreme Court's order.

Dr. Sudarshan said in the current scenario of COVID-19, the TAC instead has recommended that the government issue an advisory on completing the course of vaccination and having the certificate. "Besides, we have also advised that the State should intensify its Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities," he said.

The TAC's report dated June 12 said, "It is noted that in the recent months there is reduced/very little emphasis on IEC displays at strategic places like offices, industries, factories, IT industry, educational institutions, shops, malls, hotels, restaurants, pubs, clubs, buses, trains, cinemas, gyms, swimming pools and yoga centres."

Suitable posters should be put up at strategic places to remind people about masking, vaccinations, hand sanitization, physical distancing, getting tested if symptomatic and other COVID-19 protocol, the TAC report stated. This is keeping in mind the circulation of current variants of Omicron that are relatively mild and not serious generally in otherwise healthy individuals, it added.

However, the advisory may be reviewed if there is a change in the clinical and epidemiological scenario of COVID-19 in the State, the report asserted.

Use of award names: Court grants temporary injunction

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A city court has passed temporary injunction restraining the Amateur Body Builders and Physique Sports Federation India (ABBPSF), Bengaluru, from using names of awards like Bharath Shreshta, Bharath Shree, Bharath Kumar, Bharath Kishore, Bharath Uday.

The 18th additional city civil and sessions court passed the ex-parte interim order on June 13 on a suit filed by the Indian Fitness and Body Builders' Federation (IFBBF), Bengaluru.

It has been claimed in the suit that these award names were being used by the IFFBF since 1986 continuously and extensively for its body building awards in the competitions and hence these names have become its exclusive trademarks being their prior user and proprietor.

The IFBBF has complained that ABBPSFI has started using similar names for its awards in body building competitions with minor changes in the spellings of some the trademark award names. It has also been contended in the suit that the IFBBF has been suffering irreparable damage of goodwill as the defendant is preying upon the goodwill and a long-standing reputation of the plaintiff in the business and competition in the field of body building.

The IFBBF has sought a permanent injunction against the defendant and their agents from using these trademarks.

Police solve murder case made to look like accident

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Shidlaghatta police recently solved the murder of a 43-year-old realtor, whose death was made to look as a road accident by the assailant.

When the police checked the call record details (CDR) of the deceased, they stumbled upon repeated calls from one number and grew suspicious and summoned Venkatesh, 29, to the station for inquiry.

Dharme Gowda, Circle Inspector, Shidlaghatta, said that Venkatesh, a labourer, owned a piece of land which was a part of an ancestral property shared between him and his elder brother Nagesh. The brothers used to have differences over the property and used to fight regularly on the issue., said the police.

Venkatesh assumed that Nagesh, using the influence of Chikka Anjinappa, who was a middleman at the taluk office, would take over his share of property and decided to eliminate Chikka Anjinappa, according to the police.

As per the plan, Venkatesh stalked Chikka Anjinappa and called him multiple times to know his location on the pretext of meeting him for some work .

An unsuspecting Anjinappa gave him the location. Venkatesh was following him at Narayanadasarahalli on the Chimangala Road on June 2, while he was returning home from work.

According to the police, Venkatesh confronted him on the isolated road and hit him on his head with a branch of an eucalyptus tree. Due to the sudden blow on the head, Anjinappa sustained severe head injuries and slipped from his bike and died.

INTERVIEW | B.S. PATIL

Will make Lokayukta more proactive: Patil

He says he will take up more *suo motu* cases in all matters

K.V. ADITYA BHARDWAJ
BENGALURU

B.S. Patil, who was Upalokayukta since 2019 and in-charge of Karnataka Lokayukta since P. Vishwanath Shetty retired in January 2022, was sworn in as Lokayukta on Wednesday. He said he intended to make the Lokayukta proactive in addressing maladministration and public grievances in a more systematic way.

Edited excerpts from a conversation The Hindu had with Justice Patil after he took charge.

Bhimanagouda Sanganagouda Patil being greeted by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot after taking oath as Lokayukta in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

As you have been working in the Karnataka Lokayukta for over two years now, you know the strengths and weaknesses of the institution. What will be the focus during your tenure?

■ We need to look inwards and strengthen the institution and its human resources to do an effective job of the institution's mandate. We need to bring out the best in every employee, to ensure effectiveness and that nobody should be able to point fingers at us.

As the Upalokayukta, my experience has been that if the institution is proactive and takes up *suo motu* cases we can fight maladministration well. As Lokayukta, I intend to make the entire institution more proactive.

I will take up more *suo motu* cases in all matters of public interest that come to my notice, which will hopefully address maladministration in a more effective way. In my experience as Upalokayukta, I have seen that there are many bureaucrats who may have become complacent, but with some gentle push can deliver. But there are several instances where there are sinister designs behind maladministration which needs to be punished. We need to find a balance.

The Lokayukta's reports recommending action against bureaucrats have always suffered from long delay in response by the State government, bringing down the efficacy of the institution. How do you plan to deal with this?

■ This has been a complaint against multiple State governments for decades now. After the stipulated time available for the government to act on our reports, we will put them up on our website making our recommendation public to bring pressure on the government to act. I intend to build pressure by going public in some cases and if need be in appropriate cases, even challenge the government's inaction in the court.

What is your stand on the Anti-Corruption Bureau that was carved out of the Karnataka Lokayukta which, many have argued, has emancipated the institution?

■ The Lokayukta has submitted an affidavit in the Karnataka High Court in support of a public interest litigant challenging the formation of ACB. My stand is the stand taken by the institution. We hope the High Court disposes the petition at the earliest.

You have taken charge as Lokayukta, when there is open talk of '40% commission' in State government contracts and demands to reduce the kickbacks, not eliminate them altogether. Amidst growing perception of increasing corruption, how do you intend to respond to this?

■ If there is actionable material that is brought to our notice under the purview of law, immediately a law will be set into motion and there will be no question of sparing anyone, whoever that may be.

UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES, RAICHUR
Estate Officer, UAS, Raichur

No. EO/UASR/TND- 146/2022-23 Date:- 10-06-2022.

SHORT TERM E - TENDER NOTIFICATION

Item rate tender is invited on behalf of University of Agril. Sciences Raichur, as per KPWD standard document (KW-I) under single cover system from registered contractors of K.P.W.D. / C.P.W.D. for the Civil works at Main Campus, and Other Stations, through e-procurement platform. The details of the notification, schedule of events, and specifications can be had by visiting the link https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in there by registering with e-procurement platform.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

1) Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders : **20-06-2022 upto 16.00hrs.** 2) Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid: **21-06-2022 at 16.10hrs.**

For more details, please contact the office of the under signed during office hours (Ph. No. 08532 – 220640) and visit the link https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in for detailed tender notification. Also contact helpdesk number: 080 – 25501216 & 080 - 25501227

Sd/- ESTATE OFFICER, U.A.S, RAICHUR.

DIP/Raichur/130/MC&A/2022-23

HUBLI ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly Owned Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)
Corporate Office, Navanager, P.B. Road, Hubballi
Tel. No. 0836-2222535 Fax No. : 0836-2324307
Website: www.hescom.karnataka.gov.in
E-mail ID: seeit@hescom.co.in CIN : U31401KA2002SGC030437

No: HESCOM/SEE-IT&MT/EE-IT1/AEEIT1/2022-23/cys-1393
Date : 30.05.2022

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through E procurement portal only)

The Superintending Engineer (Ele), IT & MT, HESCOM, Hubballi invites tender in two parts (Part –I: Techno-Commercial Bid and Part-II : Price Bid) through e-procurement portal for the following works

Sl.No	Bid Indent No.	Tender Description
1	HESCOM/ SEEIT&MT/ EEIT1/ AEEIT1/CCC/ 2022-23	Providing man power (Call Centre Executives/Agents) services to the Centralized Customer Care (CCC) Centre at Navanagar, HESCOM, Hubballi"

For detailed notification regarding the bid enquiry can be obtained by logging in to the website: http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in on or after **16.06.2022** @ 11:00 AM.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (El) IT&MT, HESCOM, Hubballi.

DIPR/DWD/MCA/220/2022-23

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No.SEE/Tr(M)/RMGC/EE(O)/AEE-2/F-32/22-23/1047-49 Dated : 15.06.2022

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT MODE ONLY)

KPTCL invites bid against Enq.No. **KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/RMGC/REPAIR OF TFR/EE(O)/AEE-2/22-23/EPR-296/CALL-2 Dated: 16.06.2022** for Dismantling, transportation (To & fro), Repair, Testing, Erection and commissioning of sick Power Transformer of rating 20MVA, 66/11KV (3 Limbs), BBL MAKE, Sl. No. 4767/2 Power Transformer failed on 18.10.2021 at 66/11KV Substation Kanakapura on **Total Turnkey Basis on Percentage Tender Basis.**

The detailed notification regarding the subject tenders can be got by logging on or after **16.06.2022** to **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink 'e-procurement-KPTCL' or to **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Ele), Transmission (M), Ramanagara Circle, KPTCL, 220/66/11kV Vrushabhavati Valley Station, Mysuru Road, Bengaluru-560026

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Suchitra N W/o Rajesh T.S, D/o Nagaraju R., R/at: No.310, 6th Cross, Gokul 1st Stage, 1st Phase, Mathikere, Bangalore-560054, has entered into sale agreement for purchase of the property mentioned in the schedule below with Smt. Sudhama Devi W/o Late. Ram Kumar Jha R/at Chikkabanagere Village, Hulikunte Hobli, Sira Taluk, Tumkuru District. Now the public is hereby notified that if any persons/institutions have got any claims in respect of the schedule property are hereby requested to forward their claims with copies of the supporting documents to the under mentioned address within SEVEN days from today. If no claims are received within the said period my client will proceed and conclude the transaction as if there are no claims from any persons.

SCHEDULE

All the piece and parcel of the Agriculture property bearing Sy.No.299, Khata No.73, out of 10-00 acres 20-00 Guntas Foot Kharab, and 09-20 acres, Situated at Chikkabanagere Village, Hulikunte Hobli, Sira Taluk, Tumkuru District-572113 and bounded on:

East by : Hanumanthappa and Kallappa's Property, West by : D.Eranna's Property, North by : Road and Kadarappa's Property, South by : Gollara Nagappa's Property.

SHEKHARAPPA H.C., Advocates
No.23/1, 1st Floor, 1st Main, Near Swastik Circle, Sheshadripuram, Bangalore-22.
Date: 14-06-2022

PUBLIC NOTICE

GENERAL PUBLIC is hereby notified that our clients propose to purchase the below mentioned Schedule Property from **M/s. INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING & MANAGEMENT TRUST**, a Registered Educational Trust, having its Office at No.120, SDF Building, Salt Lake Electronics Complex, Sector-V, Kolkata-700 091 who have represented that they acquired ownership and possession to the Schedule Property in terms of two Sale Deeds viz.,(1) Sale Deed dated 30/12/2013, registered as Document No. JGN-1-05817/2013-14, in Book-I and stored in C.D.No.JGND327 and (2) Sale Deed dated 30/12/2013, registered as Document No. JGN-1-05819/2013-14 in Book-I and stored in C.D.No.JGND327, both registered in the Office of Sub-Registrar Basavanagudi (Jigani), Bangalore. Persons objecting for the proposed purchase or having any right in the said Property may lodge their objections and/or claims with the undersigned along with supporting documentary evidence within **Fifteen (15) days** from the date of this publication and objections and/or claims received thereafter will not be binding on our clients and our clients will proceed to purchase the Schedule Property as if there are no claimants/objections.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that property bearing Sy.No.271/2, (old Sy.No.271), measuring 2 Acres 4 Guntas and Sy.No.271/3 (old Sy.No.271) measuring 2 Acres 36 Guntas, totally measuring 5 Acres, equivalent to 20,234 Sq.Mtrs or 2,17,801.789 Sq.Ft., situated at Hulimangala Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, duly converted for non-agricultural educational purpose vide Official Memorandum bearing No. ALN(S)SR37/2014-15, dated 22/01/2015, issued by Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, Bangalore, presently bearing E-Panchayath Khatha No. 150200102901020066, 463/679/271/2/271/3 of Hulimangala Gram Panchayath, Hulimangala and bounded by **East**: Property in Sy.No.344; **West**: Property in Sy.No.270; **North**: Property in Sy.No.340; **South**: Property in Sy.No.271/1.

YASEEN BABU,
K.M LEGAL ADVOCATES
No.1C,'WILOCRISA', # 14,
Rest House Crescent Road,
BANGALORE-5600 01. Tel-080-25592786
Email: kmlegaadvocates@gmail.com
Date: 14/06/2022

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL,
IBC O&M Division-8, Zalaki- 586204. Tq:Indi,
Dist:Vijayapur. Email:eezalaki1@gmail.com

No: **KBJNL/IBCD-8/ZALAKI/DB/ERM Survey/2022-23 /669** Dated: 01.06.2022

QUOTATION NOTIFICATION

Information quotations regarding rates are invited from KBJNL.Registered Consultants for **Non SR Items** of Consultancy services for Survey, investigation of Indi Branch Canal from Ch.64.00 to 172.00 km, distributaries, laterals and sub-laterals including structures there under for the Year 2022-23 as per the standard norms of KBJNL by the undersigned on behalf of the Managing Director, KBJNL. Almatti.

Sl. No.	Description of Items	Unit	Qnty	Rate Excl GST
1	Conducting Survey, investigation and Preparation of Feasibility Report for by passing Ramanahalli Tank with alternate alignments and obtain approval from Project authority and preparation of Design, drawing and estimate for approved alternate alignment	Job Work	1	
2	Provision of investigation of Red Bole / Bed Bole reaches and remedial measures for the same	Job Work	1	
3	Conducting Non Destructive Testing of Structures and assessment of Hydraulic and Structural strength of the structure, Proposing for repair/ reconstruction,Preparation of designs, drawings, estimates for dismantling and reconstruction ofstructures as per reconnaissance survey report along Indi Branch Canal such as, Aqueducts, Box Culverts Syphons, Major Road Bridges complete as directed by Engineer-in-Charge	Nos	98	

NOTE *

1. The consultants can have access for e-Quotation From **10.06.2022** @ 10.30AM to **17.06.2022** upto 4.30 PM in the **web site** http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in/e-portal/index.seam **link e-tender**
2. Completed e-quotations can be submitted Upto **17.06.2022** upto 4.30 PM
3. **e**-Quotations are opened in the Office of Executive Engineer,KBJNL,IBC,O&M,DnNo.8, Zalaki on @ 11.00 AM
4. All rights are reserved by the undersigned to Accept or Reject the quotations.
5. The above 3 Items rates are exclusive of GST and all taxes, & including transportation and testing at site etc.
6. Further information about electronic tendering can be had from http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in/ **e-portal.Index.seam links.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, KBJNL, IBC O&M Division-8, Zalaki-586204.

ವಾಸಾಸಂ/ಮಿಜಯಪುರ/126/ಎಂಸಿಎ/2022–23

BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly owned by Government of Karnataka undertaking)
(CIN-U04010KA2002SGC030438)

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-procurement)

BESCOM invites tenders through e-procurement platform from eligible Bidders for Strengthening of Distribution Network in Industrial Areas of Bangalore Rural Area Zone and Chitradurga Zone for a period of 12 months on Total/Partial turnkey under item wise Fixed Price Contract on Percentage quoting Basis.

Sl. No.	Description	Enquiry Nos.
1	Strengthening of Industrial feeders of Bommasandra Industrial area along with refurbishment of DTC's of Chandapura and Veerasandra Sub-Division of Chandapura Division.	BESCOM/BCP-1412/2022-23/ BOMMASANDRA
2	Transformation of Industrial feeders of Jigani Industrial area including renovation of DTC's for improving HT to LT ratio of Distribution system of Jigani Sub-Division of Chandapura Division.	BESCOM/BCP-1413/ 2022-23/JIGANI
3	Upgradation of Distribution System of Attibele Industrial area of Attibele Sub-Division of Chandapura Division.	BESCOM/BCP-1414/ 2022-23/ATTIBELE
4	Remodelling of Industrial feeders to improve voltage regulation at Doddaballapura Industrial area of Doddaballapura urban Sub-Division of Nelamangala Division.	BESCOM/BCP-1415/2022-23/ DODDABALLAPURA
5	Improvement of Distribution network of Industrial feeders of Pillagumpa Industrial area of Hosakote Sub-Division of Hosakote Division.	BESCOM/BCP-1416/ 2022-23/PILLAGUMPA
6	Strengthening of Distribution network in Antharasanahalli Industrial area for improving reliability of power supply CSD Sub-Division, Tumkur Division.	BESCOM/BCP-1417/2022-23/ ANTHRASANAHALLI
7	Upgradation of Distribution System in Vasanthanarasapura Industrial area for improving HT to LT Ratio RSD-1 Sub Division, Tumkur Division.	BESCOM/BCP-1418/2022-23/ VASANTHANARSAPURA
8	Remodelling of distribution network in Hirehalli Industrial area, Kyatsandra Sub-Division, Tumkur Division.	BESCOM/BCP-1419/ 2022-23/HIREHALLI

Bid Documents available: 17.06.2022 onwards. **Last date for Bid Submission:** 16.07.2022, 16:00 Hrs. **Opening of Bid Document:** 18.07.2022, 16:15 Hrs.

The Tenders can be obtained through e-procurement portal web-site https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in. Aspiring Bidders need to register on e-procurement portal. Further Bidders can take assistance with e-procurement help desk contact numbers (+91-8046010000, +91-8068948777) or email at **support@.eprochelpdesk.com.**

For Electricity related complaints call: 1912
Download "BESCOM Mithra" Mobile APP

Sd/- The General Manager (Ele.), Procurement, BESCOM

PUBLIC NOTICE
CORRIGENDUM

This is to notify the general public that the Public Notice appeared in this news paper on 03-06-22 in page no. J4 the owner's name to be read as Sri. G.Shantharam S/o late Sri. G. Nagaraj. In SCHEDULE B PROPERTY kindly read the PID bearing no. as 150300201200300089 , East to West as 24.384 Meters and North to South 15.24 Meters.

A.SAMPATH, Advocate
No.20, 3rd Floor,
1st Main Road, Gandhinagar,
Bengaluru 560 009. Mob: 9845151157

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client **Mrs. Lynette Tharaken** and others are the owners a portion of the property bearing S.No.2, Binnamangala Manavarthe Kaval Village, Krishnaraja pura Hobli, Bengaluru, now known as No.2 (old No.3) situated at 4th "B" Cross, 1st Stage, Michael Palya, Bengaluru, measuring about 9000 sq.ft. The said property having purchased by the Late P.C.K. Tharakan , under a Deed of Sale dated 06th September 1963 and registered as document No. 2810, Book I, Vol. 413, pages 204 to 210, in the Office of the Sub Registrar, South Taluk, Bengaluru. The residential apartment complex "Maple Apartments", now stands on the said property .

The said original Sale Deed dated 06th September 1963, has been misplaced or lost. If any person having any claim in the said property, he/she/they shall intimate the same in writing with documentary evidence to the undersigned **within ten days** of the publication of this notice, after which date no claims will be entertained.

M/s. Da Costa & Da Costa, Advocates , Tax Consultants & Notary,
No.403, 4th Floor, Prestige Meridian 2,
Nos.30 – 31 Mahatma Gandhi Road,
BENGALURU 560 001
PLACE : BENGALURU, DATED: 14th June 2022

READ MORE IN-DEPTH CONTENT AT THE HINDU'S WEBSITE
www.thehindu.com

Text & Context

A weekday feature on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) which includes explainers, special articles and a quiz. In the latest issue (June 16, Thursday), the following explainers are available:

- How to use the command line to manage your personal finances bit.ly/cmdlinefinance
- The controversy around the Northern Ireland Protocol bit.ly/nipprotest
- The fragile state of nuclear disarmament bit.ly/siprireport

ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

Explainer

- An explainer on the Western Sahara conflict bit.ly/saharaconflict

Video

- Rooh Afza, the drink that unites India and Pakistan bit.ly/3xt5A3G
- *You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access the article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text to do the same.*

A record for Horatti as he wins Council seat for eighth time

The BJP leader attributes it to trust of two generations of teachers

GIRISH PATTANASHETTI
HUBBALLI

Former Chairman of Karnataka Legislative Council, former Minister, former JD(S), and current BJP leader Basavaraj Horatti has created history in the country by registering his eighth successive win in the election to the Legislative Council from the Karnataka West Teachers Constituency.

With this, Mr. Horatti's winning streak remains unchallenged ever since he was first elected to the Legislative Council in 1980 as a representative of Karnataka Rajya Madhyamika Shala Shikshakara Sangha.

Mr. Horatti, who was the face of JD(S) in North Karnataka till a month ago, joined the BJP just ahead of the Council election. Interestingly, although Mr. Horatti exceeds the age-limit of 75 years prescribed by the BJP high command, he was given BJP ticket much to the disappointment of the aspirants within the party. The shift in loyalty was the focus of electioneering by his opponents who said he joined a "communal" party to stay in power.

Mr. Horatti's first win had come with a victory margin of 649 votes. The unstinted support of the teachers had increased the victory margin to 5,102 during his fifth term.

The former Chairman of the Legislative Council Basavaraj Horatti during the celebrations at the BJP office in Hubballi on Wednesday. • KIRAN BAKALE

His victory margin had slumped to 2,089 in 2010, when former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa had intensely campaigned against him, reportedly after Mr. Horatti had declined Mr. Yediyurappa's offer to join the saffron party. Mr. Horatti's one-time aide turned foe S.V. Sankanur was BJP's rebel candidate then.

In 2016, again BJP leaders led by then BJP State president Pralhad Joshi, former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar, and the then Union Minister H.N. Ananthkumar, had extensively but unsuccessfully campaigned against Mr. Horatti. But this time, the same duo (Mr. Joshi and Mr. Shettar) along with other BJP leaders including Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai put their weight behind Mr. Horatti. The victory margin this time was 4,559.

Attributing his win to the trust the teachers had in him, a beaming Mr. Horatti told presspersons that teachers had never betrayed him during his over four decade-long political career and the victory was indication of the same. "No matter what allegations were made, teachers had trust in me. The fact that two generations of teachers have voted for me proves their trust," he said adding that his efforts to would be to give them "peace of mind" while in service, as the Education Department was bound have one or the other problem.

This record win of Mr. Horatti is also a great loss to JD(S) as it has lost its face in the North Karnataka region and also a Council seat. Mr. Horatti's aide and former MLA N.H. Konaraddi has already jumped to the Congress leaving the JD(S) without any prominent leader in the region. Mr. Horatti's long time-aide-turned-foe Shrishail Gadadinni, who contested as JD(S) candidate managed to get just 273 votes.

The BJP's appeal for "vote for change" in 2016 had become the tagline of the campaign by Congress this time with Basavaraj Gurikar, president of State Primary School Teachers' Association, as its candidate. Mr. Gurikar polled 4,597 first preferential votes against Mr. Horatti's 9,266. Of the 15,583 total polled votes, 1,223 votes were rejected by the election authorities.

FROM PAGE ONE

BJP, Cong. win 1 seat each

Prakash Hukkeri

The election was necessitated as the term of Mr. Horatti, BJP's Arun Shahpur (North-west Teachers), and Hanumanth Nirani (North-west Graduates), and K.T. Srikante Gowda (South Graduates) of the Janata Dal (Secular) comes to an end on July 4. Of the four, Mr. Horatti, who shifted from the JD(S) to the BJP days before he filed his nomination papers, resigned from his membership to the Council as well as from the Chairman's post. The JD(S) changed the candidature of Mr. Gowda.

In the North-west Teachers constituency, the Congress pulled off a victory against the BJP as senior party leader Prakash Hukkeri defeated incumbent BJP MLC Arun Shahpur by a margin of 5,055 votes. Mr. Hukkeri polled 11,460 votes as against 6,405 votes polled by Mr. Shahpur. Conceding defeat, Mr. Shahpur said he would accept the voters' verdict.

With the transferable preferential voting system in place, the counting took time. While the results of the teachers constituencies came early since the number of votes polled was less, with 21,402 votes in the North-west Teachers constituency and 15,583 votes in the West Teachers constituency, the results of the graduates constituencies took time as the number of votes polled was higher. The number of votes polled in the South Graduates constituency was 99,304 and in the North-west Graduates constituency, it was 58,752.

In the South Graduates constituency, which saw an intense triangular fight, Madhu Made Gowda, the Congress candidate and son of late farmers' leader G. Made Gowda, was leading by 2,958 votes when 49,700 votes, which is about half of the votes polled, had been counted. He had polled 16,137 first preference votes to lead from his nearest rival BJP candidate M.V. Ravishankar, who had polled 13,179. The JD(S) candidate Ramu was trailing behind in third place with 8,512 votes.

The results of the North-west Graduates constituency where Mr. Hanumanth Nirani, brother of Industries Minister Murugesh Nirani, was leading at the end of the fifth round of counting with a total of 34,495 first preference votes, a lead of 27,000 over Congress candidate Sunil Sunk who polled 7,495 votes.

Poll results bring no cheer to JD(S)

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The results of the election to the Legislative Council did not bring cheer to the Janata Dal (Secular) as among the two seats the party held, it lost one seat and was trailing in third place in the other.

While former Chairman Basavaraj Horatti shifted to the BJP and retained his seat, the party that was hoping to retain South Graduates constituency was trailing.

Disappointed

The party had faced an uphill task in South Graduates after it replaced incumbent member K.T. Srikante Gowda with H.K. Ramu, the former president of the Government Employees Association. This was resented by another MLC Marithibbe Gowda, who, disappointed at his aide not getting the ticket, rebelled against the party candidate.

The setback to the party follows its earlier defeat in December 2021 when the party's candidate lost from its bastion Mandya during the elections to the Legislative Council from the local authorities constituency. The regional party's strength in the council over the last couple of years has shrunk by half from 16 to now eight.

Congress to lay seige to Raj Bhavan today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Congress has decided to take out 'Raj Bhavan chalo' here on Thursday opposing the questioning of Congress MP Rahul Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate for his alleged role in money laundering linked to the National Herald case.

All party MPs, MLAs, MLCs, and leaders will participate in the protest march from the party office on Queen's Road in the city to the Raj Bhavan, KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar and Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah told presspersons. The leaders will stage protests in front of the Central government offices in districts on Friday and oppose the "politics of vendetta" by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government, they said.

The ED has questioned the leader of Congress for three consecutive days by registering a false case in the money laundering case, they alleged. The Delhi police had not even allowed party leaders to hold meetings at AICC office and they had been manhandled leaders on roads, they said.

HC quashes case against IPS officer

Former DG&IGP (Prisons) had filed the defamation case against D. Roopa

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

In a relief to senior IPS officer D. Roopa, the High Court of Karnataka has quashed a defamation case filed against her by H.N. Sathyanarayana Rao, IPS officer (retd.), in connection with the contents of an official letter that she had written to him when he was in service.

She had, in her 2017 letter, referred to various irregularities at the Central prison in Bengaluru, and the speculation around allegations of corruption against Mr. Rao, who was then heading the Department of Prisons.

The High Court said that the defamation case cannot be continued as no prior sanction was either sought nor granted by the competent authority under Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) to prosecute her for defamation under Section 499 of the CrPC.

Also, the High Court held that the communication being purely official between the two people [Ms. Roopa and Mr. Rao when both were

D. Roopa

serving in the Department of Prisons] cannot be held to be defamatory as the contents would not attract provisions of Section 499 of the Indian Penal Code.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna passed the order while allowing a petition filed by Ms. Roopa, who is presently serving as the Managing Director, Karnataka State Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd.

She had questioned the legality of the order passed by a metropolitan magistrate on October 22, 2019 taking cognisance of the offence against her, based on the complaint by Mr. Rao.

Ms. Roopa, who was then serving as Deputy Inspector General of Police (Prisons), on July 12, 2017, had written an official letter to Mr. Rao, who was then serving as DG&IGP (Prisons).

The letter contained details of her observations during an inspection of the central prison in Bengaluru, and several alleged illegalities and misconduct by jail staff.

The letter had referred to extra facilities provided illegally to V.K. Sasikala, who was then serving a sentence in a corruption case involving J. Jayalalithaa, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

Mr. Roopa had stated in the letter that Mr. Rao was apprised about the illegal facility provided to Ms. Saiskala, and there was 'speculation' that ₹2 crore was paid as bribe for continuation of such illegal facilities.

She had, in the letter, requested Mr. Rao to immediately look into these allegations and take disciplinary action against the officials concerned while pointing out that the allegations, 'unfortunately', were directed at him.

The gist of the contents of Mr. Roopa's letter were publish in the print and visual media.

Subsequently, Mr. Rao, who retired from service on July 31, 2017, filed the defamation case alleging that false allegations against him in the letter and its publication in the media had impacted his reputation.

Citing judgments of the apex court, Justice Nagaprasanna said that no offence of defamation can be made out of such official communication.

"The factual happenings in the prison were highlighted, and what was being spoken about was only a caution. A pure official communication without it being referred to any other department or a quarter, cannot become the ingredient of Section 499 of the IPC," the High Court observed. while declining to accept contention on behalf of Mr. Rao that she had sent the letters to the print and visual media too.

State reports 648 new COVID cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Karnataka on Wednesday saw 648 new infections taking the total number of cases to 39,57,991. With this the day's Test Positivity Rate (TPR) rose to 2.76% and the weekly TPR touched 2.44%.

Of the new cases, 615 have been reported from Bengaluru Urban.

With one death, the State's toll rose to 40,067. Besides, 42 deaths of patients due to non-COVID-19 reasons have also been recorded. As many as 532 persons were discharged on Wednesday taking the total recoveries to 39,13,885. As many as 23,452 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours, including 16,350 RT-PCR tests. With this, the total number of tests rose to 6,66,62,873.

Meanwhile, 25 districts have achieved 100% second dose coverage of COVID-19 vaccination in the State as of Wednesday.

Seven to take oath as MLCs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The seven leaders, who were elected to the Legislative Council recently from the Assembly, will take oath on Thursday. They are BJP members Laxman Savadi, Hemalatha Nayak, S. Keshavprasad, and Chalavadi Narayanswamy, Congress members K. Abdul Jabbar and M. Nagaraju Yadav, and JD(S) member T.A. Sharavana. Though the election was scheduled for June 3, they were declared elected earlier.

Three-day regional training camp

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The inaugural session of the three-day regional training camp for 79th Round of Socio Economic Survey of National Statistical Office (Field Operations Division) for regional office Bengaluru commenced here on Wednesday.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE
Bangalore - 560012.

Advertisement No. R(HR)Temp-13&14(MSc CS)/2022

Applications are invited for the following positions in MSc Course-work based Programme in Chemical Sciences at the Institute:

1. Instructor - 01
2. Project Associate I - 03

Last Date of Application: **06.07.2022**

For further details, visit our web site at **https://iisc.ac.in/positions-open/**

Date: 15.06.2022 **Sd/-, REGISTRAR**

'Agnipath scheme will attract youth to armed forces'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The 'Agnipath' scheme has been designed to enable a youthful profile of the armed forces, said Air Marshal Manavendra Singh, Air Officer Commanding in Chief, HQ Training Command, Indian Air Force, here on Wednesday.

"It will provide an opportunity to the youth who may be keen to don the uniform. This will also attract young talent from society who are more in tune with contemporary technological trends," he said while addressing media persons in the city. Air Marshal Singh said the scheme will enable making of skilled, disciplined and motivated manpower for society.

'No compromise'

A day after the Centre rolled out the scheme, Air Marshal Singh reiterated that there would be no compromise with the quality of cadets while recruiting under the new scheme.

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike
Office of Health Officer (Mahadevapura Zone), Whitefiled Main Road, R.H.B. Colony, Bengaluru-48.

No.BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/74/2022-23 Date: 15-06-2022

Cancellation of Tender

Regarding cancellation of tender invited through e-procurement portal for the work of mosquitoes control in the jurisdiction of MAHADEVAPURA ZONE:

Ref: 1. CHO/(PH)/PR/62/2022-23 Dated: 09-06-2022

2.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD25	Dated: 25-05-2022
3.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD26	Dated: 25-05-2022
4.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD51	Dated: 25-05-2022
5.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD52	Dated: 25-05-2022
6.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD53	Dated: 25-05-2022
7.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD55	Dated: 25-05-2022
8.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD56	Dated: 25-05-2022
9.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD81	Dated: 25-05-2022
10.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD87	Dated: 25-05-2022
11.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD82	Dated: 25-05-2022
12.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD54	Dated: 25-05-2022
13.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD83	Dated: 25-05-2022
14.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD84	Dated: 25-05-2022
15.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD85	Dated: 25-05-2022
16.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD86	Dated: 25-05-2022
17.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD149	Dated: 25-05-2022
18.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/WARD150	Dated: 25-05-2022
19.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/PWFMH	Dated: 25-05-2022
20.	BBMP/MZ/HO/PR/28/2022-23/PWF	Dated: 25-05-2022

With reference to the above subject, the tender was invited by this office for the work of Mosquitoes Control in the jurisdiction of MAHADEVAPURA ZONE, BBMP in accordance to the reference (2 to 20). And the same was published in leading newspapers on 26-05-2022. Further, due to technical reasons the said tender is cancelled.

Sd/-, Health Officer (Mahadevapura Zone), BBMP.

HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19? CALL APTHAMITRA ON 14410
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests,
Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, N.R. Square, Annex Building-3, Bengaluru

No.: DCF/PR/436/2022-23 Date: 15.06.2022

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the public and citizens of Bengaluru, that the Executive Engineer, Road Infrastructure, Mahadevapura Section, Mahadevapura Zone, BBMP have submitted an application to the undersigned for removal of trees standing from **widening and railway over bridge improvements of Karmeleram Road RHS and LHS (Sarjapura Road Junction to at Nirjahari Study Centre).** The details area given below:

Name of the project	Widening and railway over bridge improvements of Karmeleram Road RHS and LHS (Sarjapura Road Junction to at Nirjahari Study Centre).			
Name of the Agency	Executive Engineer, Road Infrastructure, Mahadevapura Section, Mahadevapura Zone, BBMP, Bengaluru.			
Purpose for removal of tree	The trees are falling within the project activities of widening and railway over bridge improvements.			
Description of the area with clear demarcation of boundaries or with GPS readings	**Sl. No.**	**Longitude E**	**Latitude N**	**Location**
	1	12.90423	77.70434	Area starting from Karmeleram Road RHS and LHS (Sarjapura Road Junction to at Nirjahari Study Centre)
	2	12.90376	77.70421	
Enumeration of trees • Total no. of trees standing in the project area	202 Nos. (Annexure-1)	Description of Trees, Species, Location, Area Map etc are uploaded in the website of BBMP for information of all. **(www.bbmp.gov.in)**		
• Total no. of trees proposed to be removed	202 Nos. (Annexure-1)			
Mode of communication of comments (Public can send their comments either by E-mail / Post / Hand)	**Address:** The Deputy Conservator of Forests & Tree Officer, BBMP, N.R. Square, Bengaluru-560002. **E-mail Id: dcfbbmp12@gmail.com**			
Deadline for filing objections	Ten (10) days from the date of Publication of this notification **Newspaper Objections/Comments/Suggestions should be relevant and specific to the project**			

In view of the above, the suggestions / objections / comments are invited from citizens under Section 8 (3) (vii) of the Karnataka Preservation of Tree Act 1976.

Sd/-, Deputy Conservator of Forests, BBMP, N.R. Square, Bengaluru

HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19? CALL APTHAMITRA ON 14410
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

SAD DEMISE

With deep sorrow,
We announce the sad demise of

SHRI. M.S. NAGARAJAN

M/s. SPB Projects and Consultancy Limited, Chennai
on 15.06.2022

We express our deep and heartfelt condolences to the sorrowing family and join in their prayers for the departed soul to attain Mukthi.
May the Lord Almighty give the entire family strength and courage to bear this irreparable loss.

Inserted by

Seshasayee Paper and Boards Limited Group of Companies

IN BRIEF

Huge cache of liquor destroyed in Prakasam

ONGOLE

Prakasam police destroyed illicit liquor worth ₹2.14 crore, seized in connection with various cases, here on Wednesday. A road roller was pressed into service to smash more than 42,000 liquor bottles seized by the sleuths of Special Enforcement Bureau and local police.

PM to inaugurate AIIMS, Mangalagiri, on July 4

ANANTAPUR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the All India Institute of Medical Sciences at Mangalagiri on July 4, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmer Welfare Shobha Karandlaje said on Wednesday. "The AIIMS is among several facilities established by the Centre across the country to improve the quality of healthcare facilities," she told the media.

Efforts to convince RBI on borrowings go in vain

HYDERABAD

The Telangana government's efforts to convince the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to raise resources to meet its financial commitments appear to have not yielded results as the apex bank continued to insist on viability and bankability of the projects for which loans have been sanctioned.

CBI arrests Labour official on bribery charge

VIJAYAWADA

Assistant Labour Commissioner (Central), Ministry of Labour & Employment, Vijayawada, Punnamalli Bapuji, was arrested by the CBI for reportedly accepting a bribe of ₹25,000 from a complainant. Searches were also conducted at the residence and on the office premises of the accused.

T.N. sees first COVID death after 90 days

476 fresh infections push the tally of active cases to 1,938; Chennai sees 221 fresh cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

After a gap of 90 days, the State recorded a death due to COVID-19 on Wednesday.

The deceased was an 18-year-old girl from Thanjavur. The last time a death was recorded was on March 17.

The toll is now 38,026. The girl had tested positive for the infection on Tuesday, and was admitted to the Thanjavur Medical College Hospital with complaints of fever and cough. She died within seven hours of admission.

The State also recorded a steep rise in infections with 476 more persons testing positive for COVID-19. Currently 1,938 persons are under treatment in the State.

In Chennai, 221 persons contracted the infection and in Chengalpattu 95. A handful of districts, including Tiruvallur with 20 new cases, the Nilgiris (23), Kanniyakumari (20), Kancheepuram (21) and Coimbatore (26), recorded the highest number of infections.

In Chennai, 7,54,046 persons have been infected and 7,43,994 have recovered so far. As on date, 984 persons are under treatment.

A total of 101 persons were declared to have recovered from the infection on Wednesday.

According to the daily bulletin of the Directorate of Public Health, 169 more were discharged after recovery.

Till date, 5,05,172 people over the age of 60; 1,28,956 below the age of 12 and 28,24,317 in the 13 to 59 years age group have contracted the infection in the State.

In 2,368 sessions held to administer vaccines against COVID-19, a total of 34,179 persons, including 5,740 senior citizens, got the jabs.

52 city streets have over 3 COVID cases

GCC to increase testing, open three COVID Care Centres

STAFF REPORTER
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma. Subramanian on Wednesday said 52 streets in Chennai had over three cases, and six of them had over five cases each.

Though Chennai was witnessing a steady rise in COVID-19 cases, nearly 90% of the patients were in home isolation with mild symptoms, he said while addressing the media after taking part in a review meeting.

Of the 782 active cases in the city (as on Monday), 684 were in home isolation. The remaining required hospitalisation.

Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma. Subramanian chairing the COVID review meeting at Ripon building in Chennai on Wednesday. • JOTHI RAMALINGAM B.

"New cases getting reported are expected to cross 200 on Wednesday," the Minister said.

Acknowledging that clusters of cases in residential areas were getting reported, he said 52 streets in the city had more than three cases, of which six had more than five cases each.

SSC exams: Students who passed can improve marks

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA

Responding to the hue and cry raised over the abysmal pass percentage in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) public examination in the State, the government has decided to give one chance to the students who did not score the minimum qualifying marks, to fare better and get through the 10th class examinations.

The State Board of Secondary Education will allocate the division (first/second/third) to students who pass the supplementary exams, on the basis of marks obtained by them. The SSC advanced supplementary exams are scheduled from July 6 to 15 and teachers have been instructed to take "remedial classes" and help the children pass the 10th Class exams.

The Education Department authorities have also proposed to allow students who obtained below 50% of marks in the SSC public examinations, to write the supplementary examinations for further improving their scores.

"We are waiting for the government nod on this," said S. Suresh Kumar, Director, School Education Department.

The special concession is being extended to this year's batch of SSC students who lost valuable academic time due to COVID-19 pandemic that kept schools closed for the longest period.

99.26% pass in Kerala SSLC examinations

STAFF REPORTER
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The shadow cast by COVID-19 notwithstanding, the pass percentage in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) examinations in Kerala this year remained above 99% for the second consecutive year.

As much as 99.26% of the students who wrote the SSLC exams became eligible for higher studies. This is 0.21 percentage point lower than the record 99.47% last year.

The number of students who secured A+ in all subjects was 44,363. No grace marks were allowed this year, Education Minister said.

A.P. committee on Pegasus spyware meets

Panel to summon officers involved

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

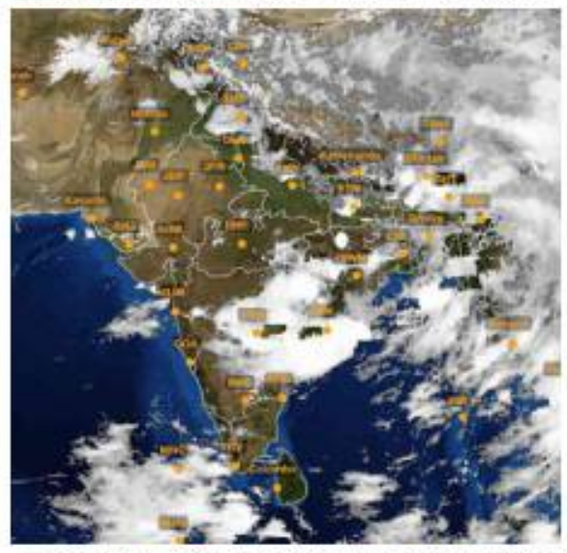
The House Committee formed by Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly Speaker Thammineni Seetharam to probe the alleged purchase of Pegasus spyware and phone tapping with its help during the Telugu Desam Party regime, met under the chairmanship of MLA Bhumana Karunakar Reddy at the Secretariat on Wednesday.

Addressing the media later, Mr. Karunakar Reddy said the gathering of information by the TDP government about political parties and individuals through surreptitious means was anti-democratic and had far-reaching security implications. The main point on the agenda was the comment purportedly made by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee that her government had spurned an offer to buy the spyware but the then government of Andhra Pradesh purchased the equipment.

One of the main allegations was that the TDP government had even kept the voters under surveillance by using their personal data in brazen violation of the Indian Telegraph Act, Information Technology Act, etc.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 16.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Gangetic West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Odisha and Lakshadweep

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	–	32.4	26.0	Kozhikode	1	33.0	26.6
Ahmedabad	–	39.7	28.0	Kurnool	143	32.0	22.2
Aizawl	1	26.1	19.7	Lucknow	–	42.3	31.3
Allahabad	–	43.1	33.4	Madurai	–	37.4	25.6
Bengaluru	31	28.0	20.2	Mangaluru	31.3	31.0	23.6
Bhopal	–	–	28.0	Mumbai	–	34.5	28.5
Bhubaneswar	–	36.3	26.0	Mysuru	76	30.0	21.4
Chandigarh	–	43.0	32.8	New Delhi	–	42.2	29.4
Chennai	–	35.4	28.0	Patna	–	41.8	27.6
Coimbatore	0.5	33.6	23.6	Port Blair	–	32.0	25.8
Dehradun	–	39.9	26.5	Puducherry	0.6	36.5	25.2
Gangtok	11.6	18.2	16.9	Pune	–	35.6	23.3
Goa	3	32.4	25.2	Raipur	2.8	42.0	25.7
Guwahati	79	26.2	23.8	Ranchi	15	27.6	22.1
Hubballi	–	31.0	22.0	Shillong	97	20.1	16.0
Hyderabad	0.1	35.3	24.0	Shimla	–	32.0	23.7
Imphal	4	26.7	22.0	Srinagar	0.4	32.8	16.1
Jaipur	–	38.9	30.0	Thiruvananthapuram	–	31.5	25.4
Kochi	28	29.8	23.8	Tiruchi	46	36.5	23.0
Kohima	11	25.5	16.0	Vijayawada	0.3	38.6	27.0
Kolkata	68	33.6	22.7	Visakhapatnam	–	34.0	29.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — Yesterday

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.6	.12	134	..57	..50	
Bengaluru	.11	.21	.16	..86	..86	
Chennai	.26	.21	.57	..31	..47	
Delhi	.12	.19	.32	.178	.143	
Hyderabad	.15	.27	.42	..39	..80	
Kolkata	.15	.16	.23	..67	..91	
Lucknow	..9	.60	.66	.221	.183	
Mumbai	..6	.18	.99	..43	..44	
Pune	120	.20	114	..88	..68	
Visakhapatnam	.15	.40	.13	..61	..82	

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ambala, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 318 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Gummidipoondi, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 21

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Panel seeks report on bridge for tribal hamlets

Concrete arch to be built in Nilambur

STAFF REPORTER
MALAPPURAM

The State Human Rights Commission has directed the Scheduled Tribes Development Department (STDD) to inform the commission within a month about the progress of the proposed concrete bridge across the Chaliyar river connecting the marooned tribal hamlets of Kumbalappara, Tharippapotti, Vaniyampuzha and Iruttukuthi in Pothukal panchayat near Nilambur.

Last month, the commission had ordered that the Scheduled Tribes Development Department to construct a concrete bridge for the 100-odd tribal families living in the four hamlets across the Chaliyar.

The tribal families were marooned since the floods of 2018 destroyed two bridges connecting the hamlets with the mainland at Munderi.

Although the Revenue department led by the then District Collector Jaffar Malik had constructed a hanging bridge by collecting funds from their colleagues, the floods of 2019 destroyed that structure also.

Ensuing blame-game

Different government departments were engaged in a blame game as the tribespeople continued to appeal for a bridge since then. They were risking their lives by depending on bamboo rafts to cross the river, especially during the monsoon.

Human Rights Commission member K. Baijunath directed the Scheduled Tribes Development Department director to furnish a report about the progress of the construction of the bridge within a month.

Imaginary battles

Cut and thrust: A view of the Oachira Kali ritual in progress at the Oachira padanilam in Kollam on Wednesday. The festival to commemorate the battle between the erstwhile kingdoms of Kayamkulam and Ambalappuzha has men and boys dressed as warriors engaged in a mock battle, held on the first two days of the Malayalam month of Midhunam. • C. SURESHKUMAR

3 held for stealing from police control centre

Goods worth ₹38 lakh was pinched

STAFF REPORTER
HYDERABAD

Three out of four people who allegedly stole copper wire bundles worth ₹38 lakh from the Police Command and Control Centre (CCC) in Banjara Hills were caught by Hyderabad police. All four accused were employed in various positions at the CCC – a State surveillance behemoth which is under construction.

One of the accused is a store helper, two were in security wing, and the fourth is an ambulance driver. The copper wire bundles stolen from a store in the building was taken away in an ambulance.

The police said that Shankar Kumar, store helper, and Sonu Khan, ambulance driver, plotted to steal the copper wires. Sourab Biswas worked as security guard and Bikash Ranjan Behera was the security supervisor. Sonu Khan, who owns the ambulance, was employed at the construction site since the past four years.

Banjara Hills police inspector K. Nageswar Rao said that the four had started stealing the bundles from April 21 of this year.

Whenever there was a chance, they loaded the bundles in the ambulance. Since Sonu was a familiar face at the construction site, and as the vehicle was an ambulance, nobody used to check it.

They sold the bundles at three scrap stores, which agreed to pay around ₹600 to ₹700 per kg. Each bundle weighed around 100 kg. As per their agreement, the accused were paid around ₹3.7 lakh, and the rest was assured to be paid after melting the wires, said the police.

Drones to drop balls with 11 lakh seeds

Major step to turn the *Yogula Parvatham* hillocks south of Tirupati greener

A.D. RANGARAJAN
TIRUPATI

A whopping 11 lakh seeds are set to be sown on the hillocks abutting the Rayalacheruvu tank, 20 km south of Tirupati, in a bid to turn the landscape greener.

Pratap Swami of Ekaveera Seva Foundation, in association with Bhakta Malla Reddy Global Foundation (BMRGF), has taken the initiative to make green the hillock, which is referred to as *Yogula Parvatham*, going by the local folklore that the hillock was home to many saints and sages in the past.

Eleven lakh seeds mixed in clay are moulded in the shape of balls, to be air-dropped over the hillocks. "The seeds have been procured from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. We have roped in 3,000 volunteers, mostly local villagers, to prepare the clay balls, which will be dropped through drones this Saturday," says Pratap Swami.

On the ball: Clay balls containing seeds are readied to be sown through drones near Tirupati. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

As the shrub jungle is prone to frequent forest fires, killing its inhabitants like small mammals, reptiles and insects, the Ekaveera Seva Foundation came up with an idea to plant 31 different varieties of massive trees with a wider canopy such as neem, pongamia, custard apple, fig, teak, tamarind, gooseberry, palash, wood apple (Maredu), banyan, sandalwood, red sanders, jammi, jamun, plum and so on.

"This will also ensure a permanent habitat and make the region rich with biodiversity, attracting visiting animals and birds", adds BMRGF representative Sumathi Reddy.

The hillock is expected to be thronged by around 10,000 visitors on the day, when Tirupati Superintendent of Police P. Parameswara Reddy formally kickstarts the ambitious project on the Kuppambadur-Appalayagunta road.

Kottayam most prone to lightning deaths

Casualties are more common in the summer season in Kerala, the study says

DHINESH KALLUNGAL
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A study by the Delhi-based RMSI, a global leader in geospatial and engineering solutions, has found that among the 14 districts in Kerala, Kottayam is the most prone to lightning fatalities, followed by Idukki and Ernakulam, especially in the pre-monsoon season (64% between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.). The study has also found that men account for around 89%, of the total lightning fatalities in the country as against women (5%) and children (6%).

Lightning fatalities are significantly more common in the summer than in the monsoon season in Kerala and the west coast of India compared with the rest of the country. The most thunderstorm days in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and adjoining parts of Karnataka (west coast of India) are observed during the pre-monsoon season (April-May) rather than in the monsoon (June-September). Here, most of the cloud-to-ground flashes from 1998 to 2005 occurred during April-June, with peak activity in May.

Strike from sky: The availability of moisture and low-level winds play a major role in forming thunderstorms. • FILE PHOTO

About 72% of lightning fatalities in Kerala have occurred in the months of April (21%), May (22%), October (19%) and November (10%). In the country as a whole, the most number of annual total lightning flash counts occurs in the monsoon (47.2%), followed by summer (41.5%) and post-monsoon season (7.7%).

Leading factors

According to Murari Lal, climate change expert, RMSI, who conducted the study, apparently, instead of incoming solar radiation, the availability of moisture and low-level winds play a dominant role in forming thunderstorms in these areas.

The top five States identified for lightning fatalities based on data from 1979 to 2011 were Kerala, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Karnataka.

Last year, around 780 people died from thunderstorms and lightning in different parts of the country.

Bulldozer on the loose

The demolition of property of Muslim activists is a challenge to the rule of law

The demolition of houses and buildings linked to protesters in Uttar Pradesh is nothing but retribution and collective punishment targeted at Muslims. The destruction of the residence of Javed Mohammed, Welfare Party of India activist and businessman, in Prayagraj, shortly after he was identified by the police as an alleged conspirator behind the violence during a protest, amply demonstrates this. The fig-leaf of legality attached to the claim that the action by the Prayagraj Development Authority was to clear an illegal building has been blown away by the fact that the notice of demolition was addressed to Mr. Mohammed, and not to his wife, who owns the property. The family's charge that the notice was served only a day before the demolition and backdated to May 10 cannot be brushed aside. It is well-known that the removal of encroachments or illegal constructions cannot take place without due process, which includes giving the owner or occupier an opportunity to be heard and finding alternative accommodation under any existing rehabilitation scheme. That officials claimed that the notice was served on Mr. Mohammed based on local enquiries shows that they were only following orders to demolish the building and had not bothered to verify the record of ownership before action. Earlier, soon after violence was witnessed in Kanpur, the city's development authority demolished a commercial building allegedly linked to one of the accused in the case.

The latest demolitions are linked to the protests that took place in the wake of controversial remarks made by the now-suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma on the Prophet. While the Centre has sought to clarify to Islamic countries that it does not brook any disrespect to any religion, U.P. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath wants to send out a message that he will not brook any protests on the issue. It is now a well-established pattern that buildings belonging to those whose names are linked, with or without evidence, to riots or protests are chosen for demolition. For political purposes, it is presented as stringent action against anti-social elements for rioting, and for legal purposes, it is portrayed as removal of illegal constructions. It is unfortunate, and a defining feature of these convoluted times that some States take such pride in demolishing buildings that they want the bulldozer to symbolise their purported resolve in keeping minorities under check. The Supreme Court has ordered that status quo be maintained in respect of the demolitions at Jahangirpuri, in Delhi. Six former Supreme Court and High Court judges and six senior advocates have appealed to the Supreme Court to take *suo motu* cognisance of the demolitions. Whether the Court acts or not, there is little doubt that the demolitions amount to an abuse of power, a challenge to the rule of law and are inherently illegal due to the absence of due process or proportionality.

Windfall

The BCCI should use its earnings to develop infrastructure and promote women's cricket

The Indian Premier League (IPL) seemingly remains immune to extraneous factors. Inflation, an economy under constant stress, a world grappling with a war in Europe and a pandemic that refuses to die down have had no bearing on the robust financial underpinnings of this domestic T20 league with an international flavour. The top-dollar yield of the IPL's latest media rights auction for the 2023-27 period, a term lasting five years, reiterates the monetary strength and brand equity of the league, which has gained incremental strength every year since its inception in 2008. Be it logistical issues such as dealing with general elections or internal rumblings like the spot-fixing and spread betting crisis, the league has an inner resilience and marches to its own beat while the hype-masters keep its marketing buzz on a high pitch. Though split into four packages in which three were a generous hat-tip to the digital markets, the media rights auction that concluded on Tuesday garnered ₹48,390 crore which is nearly thrice the ₹16,347 crore that the previous cycle offered thanks to the then successful bid by Disney Star. Even if the recent edition had its issues with a dip in TRP ratings, the league retained its sheen considering the big bucks that it continues to reap from broadcast and media firms as corporates lean excessively on it for advertising.

The interesting part this time was the segregation of the television and digital space unlike in the previous cycles. The current alteration is a pointer to the prominence of smartphones, laptops and tablets in the consumption of content. Disney Star retained the television space while shelling out ₹23,575 crore; in the package B for digital rights, Viacom18 prevailed at ₹20,500 crore. Viacom18 also won package C at ₹3,257.5 crore and in package D, Times Internet and Viacom18 split the booty. Flush with cash, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in a moment of reflexive kindness, hiked the pension of former cricketers and umpires. However, with so much money being spent on media rights, advertisers will come under pressure to spend more for commercial slots. And if the rights' holders want to maximise their profits, there could be demands to have more teams beyond the current 10, may be have two editions in the same year and this could affect the international cricketing season. With money in its coffers, the BCCI needs to improve stadiums and increase the number of international fixtures that India's women cricketers play. That someone like Mithali Raj played only 12 Tests in a career spanning 23 years is a shame. There is so much the BCCI can do and the latest windfall should help.

A ground plan for India's COVID-19 response

The population-wide application of the pandemic response can be transitioned to be focused on individual protection

CHANDRAKANT LAHARIYA

India's daily new COVID-19 cases have crossed the 8,000-mark for the first time after more than 100 days. However, the cases (moderate to severe) and COVID-19 related hospital admissions continue to be low. The spike in infections has raised some worries about the start of the fourth national COVID-19 wave in India. Epidemiologically speaking, an immediate major national wave in India is improbable. Part of the reason is that the Omicron (B.1.1.529) variant is the only globally circulating variant of concern, as of now. The Omicron sub-lineage BA.2, which caused the third national wave in India, continues to be the dominant variant in the country. Though two new Omicron sub-lineages, BA.4 and BA.5, have been detected globally and reported from India as well, their share is minuscule. Finally, there is no evidence that the BA.4 and BA.5 sub-lineages can cause a major nationwide surge in settings already exposed to BA.2 sub-lineage. Clearly, while the concerns about another national wave are unfounded, the ongoing surge demands for a fresh approach to the COVID-19 pandemic response in India.

Epidemiological triad

Then, a key question is if there is no new variant of concern, why this spike in COVID-19 cases? The answer lies in an age-old concept of epidemiology which explains 'why' and 'how' a disease spreads in any setting: the 'epidemiological triad' of agent, host and environment. Spread of a disease is an outcome of a complex interaction of the agent (or pathogen, in this case SARS-CoV-2 and its variants), host (humans and their immune-biological characteristics) and environment (social and behavioral factors).

In the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic in India, since the third wave in January 2022, with minor variations in sub-lineage, the agent (Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2) has remained largely unchanged. As far as host factors are concerned, immunologically speaking, though antibody levels wane with time and susceptibility to infection increases, declining immunity alone cannot be attributed to rising infection as neither a past infection nor COVID-19 vaccination protect from subsequent infection.

Rather, in spite of an increase in the daily new COVID-19 infections, the low rate of severe disease and hospitalisation shows that our immunity against SARS-CoV-2 is holding up. This brings the third component of the triad, i.e., environment or external factors, at the centre stage. Here, SARS-CoV-2 is very much around, in all settings, as it was for the last many months; and, it is unlikely to go away. However, there is increased travel now, economic activities are back to or even higher than their pre-pandemic level, there are regular social gatherings, and also noticeable lower adherence to face masks wearing in crowded places. Clearly, more than the agent and the host, environmental factors are driving the spike.

However, as SARS-CoV-2 is likely to be around, and as infectious diseases experts and especially those who have studied respiratory viruses would argue, localised COVID-19 case spikes are going to be a reality in many settings and for many months (and possibly years) to follow.

From an epidemiological point of view, the COVID-19 infections in India are not a public health concern any more. The reason is that June 2022 is completely different from March 2020. Back then, SARS-CoV-2 was a new virus; no one had immunity against this virus, and everyone was equally susceptible. There was no vaccine available and the risk of adverse outcomes after SARS-CoV-2 infection by age and other attributes, was unknown and unpredictable. It was clearly a public health challenge.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Nearly 27 months into the COVID-19 pandemic, most people have developed immunity either after natural infection (during three national waves) or through vaccination (nearly 97% of the adult population has received at least one shot while 88% has had two shots of COVID-19 vaccines). There is better scientific understanding of who is at higher risk of severe outcomes (everyone in the 60 years plus group and any age group with co-morbidities or weakened immunity), and the risks are known and largely predictable. Arguably, COVID-19 is less of a public health issue and more of an individual health issue.

A dynamic response strategy

Yet, a rise in daily new cases should not be ignored. However, continuing the five-pronged 'test, track, treat, vaccinate and COVID-appropriate behaviour' approach is not the best strategy for India any more and needs to be thoroughly revisited.

First, urgently revise the indicators to monitor and track the COVID-19 situation. The daily COVID-19 infections and test positivity rate may continue to be recorded but have limited utility for decision making. The two operational monitoring indicators which should be used now can be daily new symptomatic COVID-19 cases and new hospitalisations.

Second, any setting which reports a spike in COVID-19 cases should be prioritised for enhanced and expanded genomic sequencing, including the sequencing of all hospitalised COVID-19 cases and a subset of asymptomatic and the mild symptomatic cases, to track the emergence of any variant. A stronger linkage between health departments and the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics (INSACOG) Consortium network conducting genomic surveillance is needed to correlate the variants and the clinical outcomes.

Third, from now onwards the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection in India (or any setting across the world) is unlikely to be zero. Face masks and physical distancing have proven benefits in reducing transmission, but the benefit, at least in settings such as India, now is far greater at the individual level than at the population level. All social and economic activities (including schools) should continue to function to their full capacity. The face-mask recommendations should be calibrated, targeted, context-specific and evidence-guided and not uniform for the entire population. Science communication and public education should be used to nudge high-risk population groups to adopt such behaviour. The mandatory face-masks requirement for school-going children (implicit or explicit), is unscientific and without evidence. Mask guidelines for school children should be voluntary, without indirect coercion as is the case for some Indian States.

Booster shots

Fourth, there is a known benefit of third shots of COVID-19 vaccines in select, specifically high-risk population groups; however, the benefits of fourth and fifth shots are marginal and short lasting, as studies have pointed out. Essentially, just one additional COVID-19 vaccine shot to get some enhancement in the level of antibodies and possible protection make some sense. Because of hybrid immunity in India with two shots of vaccines and three national COVID-19 waves which are unlikely to have spared anyone, even with only two vaccine shots in India, the protective immunity might be equal to even greater than three vaccine shots in countries with low infection rates.

Therefore, Indian health policymakers need to be very strategic and pragmatic in the use of a third COVID-19 vaccine shot. Every surge should not result in a renewed demand and a push for booster dose uptake for adults in all age groups. After all, if you have to take just one precaution shot, there is merit in delaying it and spacing it out as long as feasible and also getting a heterologous vaccine shot. Similarly, there is no scientific rationale to rush to vaccinate children younger than 12 years.

Fifth, a disproportionately high attention on COVID-19 is not completely innocuous and rather, it diverts attention from other equally and even more pressing health needs such as tuberculosis, diabetes and hypertension, which affects a far greater proportion of India's population. It is undoubtedly time, Indian States bring the attention back on long-standing health challenges and on strengthening primary health-care services.

What must be done

After the 1918-20 flu pandemic, the influenza virus continued to be in circulation and present even today. In the last 100 years, with regular mutations in influenza viruses, there has been a seasonal rise in cases, outbreaks, and epidemics and two more influenza pandemics (1957-58 and 1968). Since then, there are annual flu seasons across the world. Being another respiratory virus and an RNA virus with a propensity for regular mutations, SARS-CoV-2 appears to be on the influenza trajectory. Factoring in country-specific SARS CoV-2 epidemiology, the population-wide application of the pandemic response in India can be transitioned to be focused on individual protection. India's COVID-19 response strategy, in the days and the months ahead, should focus on protecting the vulnerable; promoting voluntary face-mask use; strengthening COVID-19 surveillance, and using local COVID-19 data for decision making. We are on the path of learning to live with COVID-19.

Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya is a primary-care physician, epidemiologist and public health specialist. He is Founder-Director of the Foundation for People-centric Health Systems, New Delhi

In Sri Lankan crisis, a window of economic opportunity

The fruition of the idea of a Sri Lanka-south India single market sub-region can boost growth across the Palk Strait

T. RAMAKRISHNAN

In a recent interview with an Indian TV channel, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe, touched upon a less-emphasised yet significant aspect of India-Sri Lanka relations – the commonality between Sri Lanka and the southern parts of India. He even said he would "easily fit into Chennai or Kerala without a problem, while[,] similarly[,] people in the south can fit in here". This was not the first time that he has talked of forging closer ties between his country and south India.

The sub-regional context

During his second term as Prime Minister, Mr. Wickremesinghe while delivering a lecture in Chennai, in August 2003, called for the development of the south India-Sri Lanka sub-region as a single market that would provide more opportunities for the economic growth of both countries. In 2016, addressing the South Asian Diaspora Convention in Singapore, he highlighted the fact that the five Indian southern States, with a total population of 250 million, had a combined gross state domestic product of nearly $450 billion; with the addition of Sri Lanka's $80 billion GDP, the sub-region would have a $500 billion economy, having an aggregate population of around 270 million. In the southeast Asian country, he had even referred to the tri-nation economic convergence, encompassing Singapore too. Mr. Wickremesinghe's latest observations should be viewed in the context of his idea of sub-regional integration.

The present economic crisis in Sri Lanka has pushed it closer to India for immediate relief. For the last few months, the Indian media's regular coverage of the crisis has led to better understanding and even created a sense of empathy in India about the plight of the neighbouring country. India, as part of its 'Neighbourhood First' policy, has extended support to the people of Sri Lanka in the form of aid (close to $3.5 billion) to help secure Sri Lanka's food, health and energy security by supplying it essential items such as food, medicines, fuel and kerosene.

Aid from India

The latest in the series was the signing of an agreement on June 10 between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Export-Import Bank of India for a $55-million short term Line of Credit to facilitate the procurement of urea for paddy crop in the ongoing 'Yala' season. During her discussions with the International Monetary Fund in April, India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman urged the multilateral agency to provide urgent assistance to Sri Lanka. On its part, Tamil Nadu decided to provide aid of ₹123 crore, comprising 40,000 tonnes of rice, 137 types of life-saving drugs and 500 tonnes of milk powder. The first consignment, which was flagged off by State Chief Minister M.K. Stalin from Chennai on May 18, reached Colombo four days later. Mr. Wickremesinghe and the Leader of Opposition in Parliament, Sajith Premadasa, thanked the Chief Minister. About 10 days ago, at a meeting with Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to India Milinda Moragoda, the Chief Minister assured him that the second consignment would be dispatched soon.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Baggage of history as hurdle

Whether this bonhomie can lead to greater economic collaboration between Sri Lanka and south India, not necessarily Tamil Nadu alone, given the historical baggage, is anybody's guess. As pointed out by Jehan Perera, a prominent peace activist of Sri Lanka, during a discussion organised by the Press Institute of India last month on the crisis, some sections of the Sinhalese still hold the view that "India has been a threat to us. It can be a threat to us in future too". This perception can be traced to history when Sri Lanka was invaded by rulers of south India who humbled the Sinhala kings. In the aftermath of the 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom, the support provided by the Indian government to Tamil rebels only strengthened this perception. Bitter episodes of the past involving the two countries were recalled when the Indian consignments of essential commodities reached Sri Lanka.

Despite India's open willingness to take part in the development of Sri Lanka after the civil war, the scale of its involvement has been modest. The reason is not far to seek. The manner in which the Rajapaksa regime unilaterally scrapped in February 2021 a tripartite agreement signed in 2019 with India and Japan for the development of Colombo's East Container Terminal was a reflection of the historical baggage, though the official reason cited was opposition from workers' unions. Even though India was later provided with projects such as the West Container Terminal, the Trincomalee oil tank farm and a couple of renewable projects, there were several proposals that envisaged India's participation but did not see the light of day.

Another project, a collaboration between NTPC Limited and the Ceylon Electricity Board, was cancelled just when bids were to be floated for the coal-fired 500-megawatt project in Sampur in the Eastern Province (after obtaining environmental clearance). In fact, when Sri Lanka experienced prolonged power cuts a few months ago, some individuals did mention that had Sampur fructified, power shortages might not have been intense. Other projects too such as the development of the Kankesanthurai harbour and the expansion of the Palaly airport in Jaffna, both envisaging Indian participation, would have become a reality had there been show of political will from the other side. A few days ago, the Sri Lankan Cabinet was reported to have cleared two connectivity proposals: flights from Jaffna to Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu, and a ferry service from Kankesanthurai to Karaikal in Puducherry. The project of building a sea bridge and tunnel, connecting Rameshwaram to Talaimannar, remains on paper despite India's Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari informing the Lok Sabha in December 2015 of the Asian Development Bank's readiness to fund it. It requires no great imagination to find out why several popular brands of south Indian restaurants and retail textile establishments, despite an overseas presence, not having opened their branches in Sri Lanka.

Vast potential

Even now, there is enormous scope for collaboration between the two countries in the area of infrastructure development. The economic crisis has revived talk of linking Sri Lanka's electricity grid with that of India. If this project takes off, the first point of interconnectivity on the Indian side will most likely be in Tamil Nadu. India has cross-border energy trade with Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar.

India's interests would also be served by developing the east coast of Sri Lanka, especially the Trincomalee-Batticaloa belt, whose potential for tourism, commerce, trade and industry is well known. At an appropriate time, regular movement of people and goods should be allowed again on the traditional sea routes of Thoothukudi-Colombo and Rameshwaram-Talaimannar. The apprehension in the minds of sections of the Sinhalese majority about India being a threat can be dispelled only by facilitating greater people-to-people interaction, including pilgrimages by monks and other sections of Sri Lankan society to places of Buddhist importance not only in north India but also in the south (Andhra Pradesh). Much more will have to be done but the opportunity created by the current circumstances should be utilised to bring Indian and Sri Lankan societies closer – a prerequisite to achieving an economic union between Sri Lanka and the southern States of India.

ramakrishnan.t@thehindu.co.in

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Jobs plan

If the Government's promise of large-scale recruitment "within the next 18 months" is realised in letter and spirit, it will definitely be a milestone (Page 1, "10 lakh persons to get govt.jobs in 18 months, announces Modi", June 15). The Government should leave no stone unturned in making the announcement of mass recruitment "in mission mode" a reality, as the economy is being hit by inflation, and the unemployment rate is on the rise. Importantly, the Government needs to make the process of recruitment transparent and fair.

S. SANJEEVI RAO,
Puducherry

■ The report only makes one recollect the lost promise made eight years ago: crores of jobs. There needs to be data analysis of the jobs created under this Government; the state of unemployment has been made worse by actions taken during the pandemic. The 'promise' now only seems to be a gimmick and optics before 2024.

GEORGE MLAKUZHYIL,
New Delhi

Bulldozer democracy

Closely following the protest by renowned former judges and senior lawyers against bulldozing dwellings in Uttar Pradesh, a lawyer, though visually handicapped, walked into the Court Hall where I was and whispered, 'Is this democracy?' It made me reflect. Though handicapped he had a constitutional vision. Those in authority who are expected to have a vision are the ones who are visionless.

N.G.R. PRASAD,
Chennai

A poverty trend in search of an explanation

The delay in household consumption expenditure survey leaves us unsure of the studies

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

GETTY IMAGES

A noticeable absence in the blitzkrieg of information on the economy periodically unleashed by the Union government over the past few years has been estimates of poverty. A measure of the progress made with respect to the reduction of poverty in India is crucial to an assessment of the state of the economy of India, known to harbour the world's largest number of poor people. The last official estimate of poverty that is comparable over time, undertaken by the Planning Commission, is for the year 2011-12. The reason behind this state of affairs is that we have not had a household consumption expenditure survey for a subsequent year, such a survey being the ideal basis for poverty estimation.

Real consumption expenditure

A consumption expenditure survey was conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) for 2017-18, but was rejected by the government as defective. Whether this decision was taken upon the advice of independent experts is not known, but a leaked version of the report showed that real consumption expenditure had fallen since 2011-12. At the time, a leading commentator on the economy had poured cold water on this possibility, stating that a decline in consumption is not possible when income (GDP) has grown.

In a prior article, I had at that time pointed out that a decline in consumption cannot be ruled out even in the presence of growth, for the income distribution could shift in a way that leaves those at the lower end of the distribution with less real income. The Union government's rejection of the report for 2017-18 has meant that we have not been able to say anything about the trend in poverty over a whole decade.

Now two recent studies have made up for this lacuna, emerging as they do, separately, from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (henceforth Fund-Bank). The first is a working paper by Bhalla, Bhasin and Virmani and the other is by Roy and van der Weide. Both are in the public domain. It may be noted that as they are not based directly on a household expenditure survey, they arrive at estimates of consumption spending, and thereby poverty, by making somewhat strong assumptions, but I shall here accept their estimates at face value.

In the absence of official estimates of poverty in India for the past decade, these studies have naturally gathered attention. They give us an estimate of the poverty rate for five data points after 2011-12, poverty identified as per capita consumption of less than $1.90 per day, being the World Bank's definition of "extreme poverty". While the level of poverty estimated by these two studies varies considerably, with the one by Roy and van der Weide showing twice the poverty level estimated by Bhalla et al., they share a common feature, which is an accelerated decline in poverty since 2011-12, with the acceleration commencing in 2014-15 in the Bhalla et al study and in 2016-17 in the former.

Now, though growth in the economy has slowed progressively from 2017-18, accelerated decline in poverty as overall economic growth slows is neither implausible nor unprecedented. We know that the first significant dent in poverty in India occurred in the late 1960s, while growth had begun to slow from the mid-sixties. Indeed, the poverty decline had continued even as growth spluttered for a whole decade. This co-movement can be quite easily explained by the feature that as the economy-wide growth rate had slowed, growth in India's agricultural sector permanently shifted to a higher gear following the Green Revolution i.e., we have seen a higher average annual agricultural growth ever since. With the workforce concentrated overwhelmingly in agriculture, it would be expected that wages and consumption of rural workers grew. Rural poverty declined steadily. A decline in urban poverty was to take longer, pointing to the historic role of agriculture in India.

Effects of demonetisation

It is difficult to see a surge in any one sector of the economy since 2016-17 that is comparable to the increase in the rate of growth of agriculture in the second half of the 1960s. Of course, theoretically there remains the income distribution shift to be considered, but it is difficult to imagine that the income distribution has shifted towards the lower income groups in this period, when the long-term trend is known to be the opposite.

Moreover, the demonetisation of 2016 is likely to have affected majority of workers adversely. While this is only a surmise, data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey show the unemployment rate rising sharply after demonetisation remaining higher than in most years of the decade, going all the way back to 2011-12. It is difficult to imagine an accelerated decline in poverty during such a phase.

At a webinar organised by the National Council for Applied Economic Research on June 9, I had asked the most widely known of the authors of the Fund-Bank studies his understanding of what drove the decline in poverty during the period under observation. His answer was that since inflation has been lower since 2014, real wage growth would have been faster, enabling greater consumption and thus an accelerated decline in poverty.

As a quick check, if not a test, on the plausibility of this hypothesis, I computed real wage growth starting 2015-16, the mid-point of the year from which the acceleration commences in each of the two Fund-Bank studies. The annual all-India real wage growth is computed for two groups of rural men, namely non-agricultural labourers and construction workers. The economy-wide inflation rate was adopted. All data were drawn from the RBI's website. The resulting estimates show that for non-agricultural labourers, annual real wage rate growth was either negligible or negative in four out of the five years during the period 2015-16 to 2019-20, the end point for both the studies. For construction workers, annual real wage growth was negative in three years, barely positive in one year and slightly over 1% in only one year. There appears to have taken place little real wage growth since 2015-16.

This finding, that there has been very little real wage growth since 2015-2016, cannot be taken as a rejection of the Fund-Bank estimates of poverty. It does, however, underline the need for an explanation of the accelerated decline in poverty that they report.

We need to understand the drivers of poverty to undertake any kind of remedial action. But above all, we need reliable data provided by independent public bodies ring-fenced from potential political interference. That we once had this in India is seen from the Planning Commission estimates in 1997 that showed a slowing of the rate of poverty reduction soon after the reforms, resulting in a rise in the number of poor in 1993-94 for the first time in 15 years. The then government could have squashed the study, but to its credit it did not. Decades later, we seem to be backsliding.

In particular, the delay in this government's undertaking of a household consumption expenditure survey leaves us unsure of the trend in poverty in India in recent years.

Pulapre Balakrishnan teaches at Ashoka University, Sonipat

India's lingering homophobia

The homophobic attitude of society goes against the constitutional tenet of fraternity

FAISAL C.K.

Pride Month comes and goes; but homophobia in India is here to stay like a spectre. As a good omen for Pride Month of this year, the Kerala High Court set a trailblazing precedent recently by sanctioning a lesbian couple, Adhila Nasarin and Fathima Noora, to live together after they were coercively separated by their parents. Ms. Nasarin had filed a habeas corpus petition following which Ms. Noora, who was allegedly "incarcerated" by her family, appeared before court. The court simply asked the couple if they wished to live together, to which they replied yes. The joy of the couple spilled over into social media. People congratulated the court and many social media profiles talked about gender spectrum. But alarmingly, it triggered rude homophobic chirpings too in the cyber streets. It exposed that the "God made Adam and Eve; not Adam and Steve" attitude lingers in Indian society.

The Indian Psychiatric Society authentically stated that homosexuality was not a mental disorder; but that sentiment has not convinced most Indian homes.

An attitudinal temperament

Homophobia is defined by *Britannica Encyclopedia* as culturally produced fear of or prejudice against homosexuals that sometimes manifests itself in legal restrictions or, in extreme cases, bullying or even violence against homosexuals. The term 'homophobia' was coined by George Weinberg, an American clinical psychologist, in his book *Society and the Healthy Homosexual* (1972). The suffix 'phobia' generally designates an irrational fear, in the case of homophobia, the word instead refers to an attitudinal temperament ranging from mild dislike to abhorrence of people who are sexually or romantically attracted to individuals of the same sex. It is a culturally conditioned response to homosexuality. Homophobia runs against the Constitutional values of fraternity and dignity.

J.B. Kripalani, a prominent member of the Constituent Assembly, commented on the principle of fraternity in the Assembly: "I come to the great doctrine of fraternity which is allied with democracy. It means that we are all sons of the same God, as the religious would say, but as the mystic would say, that there is one life pulsating through us all, or as the Bible says, we are one of another. There can be no fraternity without this. So, I want this House to remember that what we have enunciated are not merely legal, constitutional and formal principles, but moral principles; and moral principles have to be lived in life. They have to be lived whether it is private or it is public life..." The social and psychological abhorrence prevailing in India against the LGBTQ+ community nullifies the constitutional fraternity that is to be lived out in public and private life of the nation.

Queerness isn't modern, western or sexual only, says mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik in his *Shikhandi: And Other 'Queer' Tales They Don't Tell You* (2014). He opens the treasure box of vast written and oral traditions in Hinduism, some over two thousand years old, to show us many overlooked tales, such as those of Shikhandi, who became a man to satisfy her wife; Mahadeva, who became a woman to deliver his devotee's child; Chudala, who became a man to enlighten her husband; and many more.

'Highest place to fraternity'

Fraternity too is not a pure western ideal. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar elucidated the Indian roots of the ideal of fraternity during an All India Radio interview in 1954: "My social philosophy may be said to be enshrined in three words: liberty, equality and fraternity. Let no one, however, say that I have borrowed my philosophy from the French Revolution. I have not. My philosophy has roots in religion and not political science. I have derived them from the teachings of my master, the Buddha... he gave the highest place to fraternity as the only real safeguard against the denial of liberty or equality – fraternity which was another name for brotherhood or humanity, which was another name for religion." Dr. Ambedkar championed the ideal of fraternity to uphold the cause of the oppressed castes, Dalits. The same principle is felicitous to the gender Dalits of present-day India – the LGBTQ+ community. The society should not deprive the LGBTQ+ community of affection and regards thanks only to their sexual orientation.

In *Is God anti-gay*, Sam Allberry quotes the Bible: "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." (John 6 v 35). Allberry concludes his booklet by saying that "the invitation [of God] is there for everyone. And so precious is the gift that God cannot be truly said to be 'anti' anyone to whom this wonderful gift is being offered." If God is not anti-gay, how can His sons and daughters be homophobic?

Faisal C.K. is Under Secretary (Law) to the Government of Kerala

STATE OF PLAY

Time to roll out exam reforms

A way below par performance puts the spotlight on quality of education

P. SUJATHA VARMA

The unusually low pass percentage of students in the Secondary School Certificate examinations in Andhra Pradesh this year is worrisome. Only 67.26% of the total 6,15,908 students who appeared for the exam have cleared the all-important Board examinations and a disturbingly high number of 2,01,627 students have failed, contributing to the lowest pass percentage in Class 10 examinations in the State in the last 20 years.

A dissection of the exam fiasco brings to the fore two major factors leading to the dismal performance of students. The devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector with the longest school closures resulting in children losing valuable instructional time for many months at a stretch slowed the learning process. In post-COVID times, the overall welfare of children has declined substantially and they are deprived of the nutrition they received under the government-sponsored meal scheme.

The parents of students who failed have made a request to the government to allot 10 grace marks and help their children regain confidence that has taken a beating due to their failure and the demand has been endorsed by a few teacher unions and the Opposition party leaders, including the Jana Sena Party president Pawan Kalyan.

The Class 10 results gave yet another platform to politicians for mudslinging. The ruling party, Yuvajana Shramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) blamed the Telugu Desam Party for "allowing the rot of examination malpractices to continue during its rule in the State" while the latter holds the "YSRCP responsible for suicides by Class 10 students after the release of the exam results."

The other reason cited for the enormity of the non-performing students is a reason to ponder over. "This result is on expected lines given the tough stand we adopted against malpractices in the exams this year," said Director of the School Education Department S. Suresh Kumar.

The worrying part is that teachers resorting to malpractices outnumbered the erring students. Recognising the need to nip this immoral practice in the bud, the government, for the first time, invoked the AP Public Examinations (Prevention of Malpractices and Unfair Means) Act, introduced 25 years ago. Arrests of a large number of teachers, many from government schools, as part of punitive measures to cleanse the examination system, worked as a deterrent, resulting in abysmally low rate of success in the public examination.

The government rolled out a slew of reforms in the education sector, sending out a clear message to non-performing institutions to clean up their act or risk being shut down. In a move to end malpractices, the exam pattern for students who wrote their SSC exams in 2019 was revamped.

Experts say that a good beginning has been made, but creating the right ecosystem to impart quality education will be a major challenge. Knowledge, skills and expertise being key enablers in this era of technology-driven disruptions, making children break away from the traditional rote learning, specifically in schools located in small villages, will be an uphill task, they point out.

The department officials have started discussing modalities to scale up reforms in the examination system by means of putting in place a fool-proof mechanism, besides initiating the exercise of improving quality of teaching by training and supporting them with modern teaching aids, tools and methodologies. The objective is to integrate the concept of lifelong learning and empower the students and make them productive citizens.

pothuri.varma@thehindu.co.in

DATA POINT

India, China help lift Russia's post-war oil exports

In 2022, despite severe sanctions, Russia's crude oil exports have been higher than the 2021 levels. While the European countries have continued to source their oil from Russia at levels recorded in 2021, exports were markedly higher to non-EU and non-G7 countries such as India. In just past four months, India has imported from Russia more than half the value of crude oil it did in the past five years put together.

By **The Hindu Data Team**

ILLUSTRATION: MU. AJAY KRISHNA

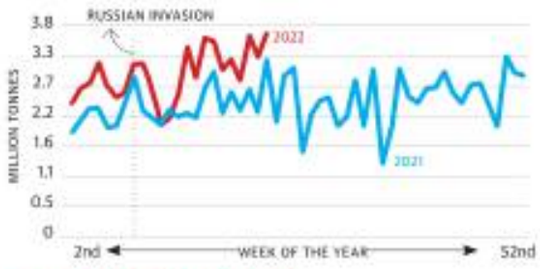
3,619 In million Euros, the value of India's crude oil imports from Russia post the invasion

6 India's position among the largest importers of Russian oil post the invasion

1% Share of Russian oil in India's total crude oil imports in the past five years

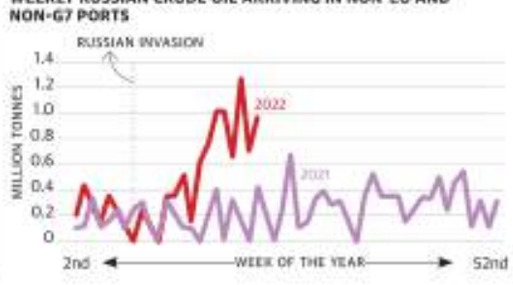
1. MOSCOW'S OIL EXPORTS RISE | The chart shows weekly exports of Russian crude oil for 2021 (—) and 2022 (—). Following the invasion, Russia's crude exports have been, in general, higher than 2021 despite sanctions imposed by many countries

WEEKLY CRUDE OIL LEAVING WESTERN AND ARCTIC RUSSIAN PORTS



2. BUYERS POST WAR | In 2022 (—), Russian crude oil exports to European countries were similar to the levels recorded in 2021 (—). In contrast, Russia's crude oil exports to non-EU and non-G7 countries such as China and India have surged this year post the invasion of Ukraine

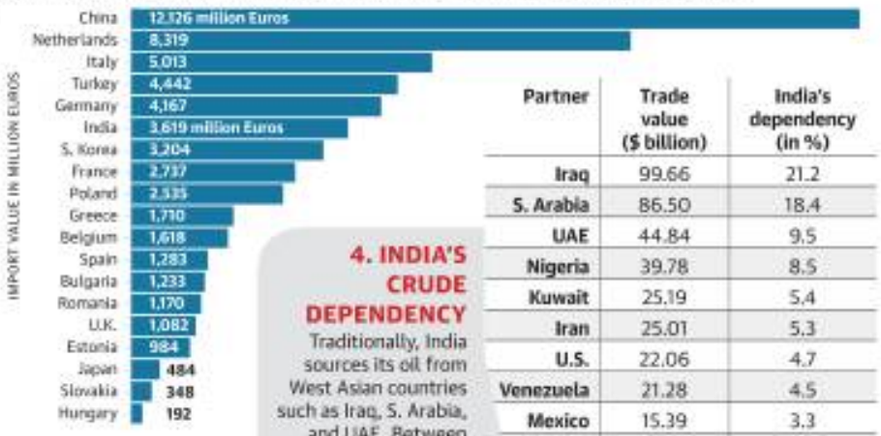
WEEKLY RUSSIAN CRUDE OIL ARRIVING IN NON-EU AND NON-G7 PORTS



3. LARGEST IMPORTERS | The chart shows the largest importers of crude oil from Russia, post the invasion of Ukraine. Since February 24, 2022 India imported Russian oil worth 3,619 million euros – sixth highest among all countries

A back-of-the-envelope calculation shows that the value of crude oil imported by India in the past four months amounted to $3.7 billion. Whereas India's total crude oil imports from Russia in the last five years were $7.2 billion

BRUEGEL'S ship data is from Genscape and is available using the following aggregators: Bloomberg, CREA and MarineTraffic. CREA tracked ship voyages between ports in Russia and other countries using data from MarineTraffic.com and Datalastic



SOURCE: RUSSIAN CRUDE OIL TRACKER BY BRUEGEL, CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON ENERGY AND CLEAN AIR (CREA)

4. INDIA'S CRUDE DEPENDENCY

Traditionally, India sources its oil from West Asian countries such as Iraq, S. Arabia, and UAE. Between 2017 and 2021, India sourced only 1% of its crude oil needs from Russia – which ranked 14th among India's suppliers

Partner	Trade value ($ billion)	India's dependency (in %)
Iraq	99.66	21.2
S. Arabia	86.50	18.4
UAE	44.84	9.5
Nigeria	39.78	8.5
Kuwait	25.19	5.4
Iran	25.01	5.3
U.S.	22.06	4.7
Venezuela	21.28	4.5
Mexico	15.39	3.3
Angola	12.36	2.6
Malaysia	7.74	1.6
Oman	7.72	1.6
Brazil	7.37	1.6
Russia	7.22	1.5

The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 16, 1972

New world order

Stockholm, June 15: The Prime Ministers of India and Sweden have pledged to work for a new world order that would guarantee the economic independence and progress of developing nations. At a banquet held in honour of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Swedish Prime Minister Dr. Olaf Palme said colonialism in principle was dead but "there is a long way to travel" in regard to the economic independence and development of the new nations. In reply to the toast, Mrs. Gandhi criticised attempts by some Big Powers "to control balances and to carve out spheres of influence" and to dominate the developing countries by exploiting their economic weakness. Vietnam had shown that even a small country without economic and military strength could defy the mightiest power if it had the inner strength of the spirit, Mrs. Gandhi added. India, she declared, had not thrown off the yoke of imperialism "in order to accept any other protective umbrella." It would maintain its policy of non-alignment, notwithstanding the pressures. The two Prime Ministers reiterated their common commitment to bringing social transformation through democratic process and close identity of views on international issues.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 16, 1922

Colonial development

London: A deputation from the Federation of British Industries and the London Chamber of Commerce submitted to Mr. Woods, under Secretary for Colonies a proposal for the establishment of unofficial committees in the Colonies to advise Governors on matters of finance and also a similar body in London to keep in touch with the Colonial Office. The deputation urged the desirability of postponing certain general schemes of development undertaken during influence of the boom period. Mr. Woods, replying, questioned whether high taxation would result in extravagant expenditures and emphasised the achievements of the Colonial Government during the past two years. He suggested that a short sighted policy would defer many development schemes largely undertaken for the benefit of British industry and for traders profit when trade revived. He pointed out nothing could prevent any Governor on his own initiative establishing an advisory committee and mentioned that one had already been appointed in Kenya. He referred sympathetically to the idea of a London Advisory Committee.

FROM PAGE ONE

17 Oppn. parties to field a common candidate

The key absentees included the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS). The AAP, according to sources, has said it will wait and see whose name emerges and then decide. The TRS remains non-committal.

Wednesday's meeting was just to bring all parties on one platform. Sources said that no detailed discussions on any candidate was held. At the very beginning, Ms. Banerjee said the Trinamool and other Opposition parties would have wholeheartedly supported Mr. Pawar's candidature, but since he had already rejected the idea further consultations were required.

None of the other leaders mentioned any names, and towards the close of the meeting, Ms. Banerjee suggested Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Abdullah. Both these names were discussed at a meeting that CPI (M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury and CPI general secretary D. Raja had with Mr. Pawar.

The Left had supported Mr. Gandhi's nomination in the 2017 Presidential election too, but withdrew his name after the Congress pushed for former Speaker Meira Kumar's candidature.

Ms. Banerjee, in her opening remarks, expressed concern at the misuse of Central agencies at the behest of the Modi government, citing the Enforcement Directorate's case against Congress president Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi.

Mr. Kharge said, the Opposition should be proactive and not reactive. The Congress party, he said, had no particular candidate in mind and was willing to back a candidate acceptable to all. He said many parties at the meeting competed with each other in Assembly elections. But that had not prevented this meeting from taking place, because each party had taken a larger national view and come here for a bigger cause. Obliquely expressing Congress's concern at being outfoxed by the Trinamool, Mr. Kharge said: "Let me close by saying that we must remain united and disciplined and not score political points against each other. The unity we demonstrate now will have implications going well beyond the Presidential polls".

The Left parties, represented by Elamaram Kareem (CPI-M) and Binoy Viswam (CPI), said without taking names that other Opposition parties who were not present should also be convinced to join forces.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Kharge, Jairam Ramesh and Randeep Surjewala from the Congress, DMK MP T.R. Baalu, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, RLD president Jayant Chaudhary, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti and senior National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, among other leaders.

Cabinet approves mega 5G auction from July-end

The notice inviting offer said direct allocation to the big tech companies will follow a demand study and sector regulator TRAI's recommendation on aspects such as pricing and modalities of such allocation.

Big tech companies like Google have been seeking direct allocation of spectrum for applications such as machine-to-machine communications, IoT and AI, while telecom companies have been opposing direct allocation of 5G spectrum to them saying it will distort the level playing field and rob the government of revenues. According to the document, the auction is slated to start on July 26, 2022. Among other key dates to watch out for is the pre-bid conference scheduled for June 20, 2022, submission of applications with a deadline of July 8, and pre-qualification of bidders on July 18. Mock auctions will be held on July 22 and 23, 2022. Overall, the payment terms have been eased for bidders in the coming auction.

Daughter of judge held in murder case

Sidhu had started his own law firm in the name of Sippy Sidhu LLB in Punjab's Mohali. On the night of September 20, 2015, he was gunned down by unknown persons.

After Sidhu's killing, his family had alleged the role of the woman. The local police then questioned her. The victim's relatives held protests seeking justice. Subsequently, on a reference from the Chandigarh administration, the CBI re-registered the case on April 13, 2016.

In September 2016, the agency announced a reward of ₹5 lakh for clues leading to the identity of those involved in the murder. The amount was increased to ₹10 lakh in December 2021.

In December 2020, the CBI had submitted an "untraced report" in a court, with a plea that it would like to continue the probe giving a strong suspicion about the woman suspect's role.

Based on its findings, the agency finally summoned Ms. Singh for questioning and arrested her as she was allegedly evasive in her responses. "She was remanded in four-day police custody," said a CBI statement.

ED summons Rahul again tomorrow

Congress alleges trespass by police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

As former Congress President Rahul Gandhi went in for questioning by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case linked to the *National Herald* newspaper for the third consecutive day on Wednesday, there were tense moments at the All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters as Delhi police personnel barged into its premises and dragged out workers, including a former Lok Sabha member.

Rahul Gandhi

Mr. Gandhi has been summoned again on Friday for further questioning.

Demanding the registration of an FIR for "criminal trespass" and beating up of workers without any provocation, the Congress said the Delhi police were behaving like the BJP's "private army". Later, the party filed a complaint at the Tughlaq Road police station.

"This is patently criminal trespass. The goondaism of the Delhi police and the Modi government has reached its zenith," the party's chief spokesperson, Randeep Surjewala, told reporters.

Doval attends meeting hosted by China

Both sides downplay differences on anniversary of Galwan conflict; BRICS summit to held on June 24

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval attended a virtual BRICS meeting hosted by Chinese NSA Yang Jiechi on Wednesday, aimed at strengthening "political and security cooperation" within the five-nation grouping of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

The BRICS Security Advisers and High Representatives meeting underway on Wednesday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Sources said that Mr. Doval called for cooperation on terrorism "without reservations", and preventing the use of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) by terrorists during the meeting. He also emphasised the "need for urgent reform of the multilateral system", and the importance of resilient supply chains.

Significantly, the NSA's meeting was one of two multilateral events attended by India and China on a day that marked two years since the Galwan clashes along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). On Wednesday, New Delhi also hosted a border security conference of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) countries, that includes officials from China, Russia, Pakistan and Central Asian countries.

"With profound changes in the international landscape interwoven with a pandemic unseen in a century, our world has entered a new phase of turbulence and transformation," Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Wednesday, adding that China would work with BRICS members to "further consolidate political mutual trust, deepen political and security cooperation, uphold the five countries' security and development interests, and contribute to world peace and stability".

The virtual meeting came a week ahead of the BRICS summit on June 24 hosted by Chinese President Xi Jinping, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend along with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

This will be the first BRICS summit after the Russian invasion of Ukraine , and will be watched closely for the discussions between the leaders. On Wednesday, Mr. Xi spoke to Mr. Putin, reaffirming China's "mutual support" for "sovereignty and security". Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also spoken to President Putin over the telephone several times since the beginning of the conflict, but this will be the first such occasion when all three leaders will be on a common platform along with Brazilian President Bolsonaro and South African President Ramaphosa, albeit virtually.

Meanwhile, the BSF hosted the 21st meeting of the Experts Group and eighth meeting of the Heads of Border Authorities of the Competent Bodies of SCO member states in New Delhi.

The meetings on Wednesday, the two-year anniversary of the clashes in the Galwan valley where 20 Indian soldiers were killed in brutal clashes with Chinese soldiers, also signify an attempt by New Delhi and Beijing to downplay the differences between the two countries despite the standoff between an estimated 1,00,000 soldiers on both sides of the boundary.

Justice Desai is new Press Council chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai, a former judge of the Supreme Court, has been selected for the post of the Press Council of India (PCI) Chairperson.

Justice Desai had recently headed the Delimitation Commission on J&K which was set up to redraw the Assembly constituencies of the Union Territory.

A committee comprising Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Press Council member Prakash Dubey approved her appointment at a meeting held on Tuesday, sources said.

The post was lying vacant since Justice Chandramauli Kumar Prasad (retd.) completed his term in November last year.

Petition in SC seeks stringent population control law

It will secure the fundamental rights of citizens: petitioner

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A Mathura resident has asked the Supreme Court to direct the government to "ascertain the feasibility" of enacting a "stringent population control law."

Devkinandan Thakur Ji, the petitioner, said such a law would secure the fundamental rights of citizens, including the "right to peaceful sleep" along with "clean" air, water, food, health and shelter. Mr. Thakur said the injury caused by population explosion for women especially was "extremely large".

Impact on women

"The impact that repeated child-bearing has on women are seldom highlighted outside niche areas," the petition said.

It said the "incidents of grand multiparity, which is defined as more than four viable births, in developing countries like India is 20% while it is only 2% in developed countries".

In December 2020, in a similar petition filed by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay, the government had clarified that it was against coercing couples into having a "certain number of children" in a bid to curb population explosion.

In fact, the government said the period between 2001-2011 had witnessed the sharpest decline in decadal growth rate among Indians in a 100 years.

Government's stand

"The Family Welfare Programme in India is voluntary in nature, which enables couples to decide the size of their family and adopt the family planning methods best suited to them, according to their choice, without any compulsion," the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had said in an affidavit.

It said India was a signatory to the Programme Of Action (POA) of the International Conference on Population and Development, 1994, which was unequivocally against coercion in family planning.

Myanmar unlikely to be part of ASEAN-India meeting

India has been under pressure to avoid country's inclusion

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

The Foreign Minister of Myanmar is unlikely to be part of the 24th ASEAN-India Ministerial here on Thursday, an official source indicated.

Myanmar's representation at the meeting was in focus as India had been under pressure to avoid inclusion of Myanmar in the high-level meeting. The other factor behind Myanmar's absence is the souring ASEAN-Myanmar ties that were affected beginning with the February 1, 2021 coup that overthrew the Aung San Suu Kyi government in Myanmar.

The Hindu had earlier reported that India was unlikely to invite Myanmar Foreign Minister Wunna Maung Lwin. The Ministry of External Affairs last week announced that the participation of Myanmar in the ASEAN India Senior Officials' Meeting will follow the "ASEAN consensus".

Wunna Maung Lwin

The non-participation of Wunna Maung Lwin in Thursday's meet is being interpreted as India accommodating international concern over the junta in Myanmar which has refused to enter into a negotiation with the protesters demanding restoration of democracy. In comparison, the Foreign Minister Wunna Maung Lwin had participated in the BIMSTEC summit in a virtual format earlier. That participation had drawn criticism from the United States.

However, Myanmar Senior General and *de facto* ruler Min Aung Hlaing sent a message for the 25th anniversary of BIMSTEC - Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation - on June 6 in which he wished "peace and prosperity" for the Bay of Bengal community.

Wednesday's meeting witnessed India welcoming "positive contributions of and continued support of Singapore" in strengthening ASEAN-India relations as the Country Coordinator.

Agniveers to get priority in CAPF recruitment

Data show 80% decline in recruitment since 2017, only 10,000 personnel recruited in 2020

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

Youth recruited in the armed forces under the short-term 'Agnipath' scheme will get priority in recruitment to the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) and Assam Rifles, the Union Home Ministry announced on Wednesday.

A senior Ministry official said the details were being worked out, but 'Agniveers' would be given priority when they completed the four years of military service. Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Tuesday that the Ministry had taken steps to fill vacancies in mission mode in accordance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's instructions to recruit 10 lakh personnel in a year and a half.

High priority: In 2020, only 10,184 CAPF posts were filled, while vacancies stood at 1.29 lakh. • FILE PHOTO

However, according to the latest Home Ministry data, there has been an over 80% decline in the number of CAPF personnel – constables, sub-inspectors and assistant commandants (ACs) – recruited in the past four years. The 10-lakh-strong CAPF is one of the largest employment generation agencies under the Home Ministry.

According to the 2021 Data of Police Organisations report, in 2020, only 10,184 CAPF posts were filled, while vacancies stood at 1.29 lakh.

In 2017, as many as 58,396 personnel were recruited against vacancies of 77,153.

In 2018 and 2019, the number of such recruits stood at 30,098 and 14,541, respectively.

'Bulk of appointments'

In 2020, the bulk of such appointments – 7,369 constables and sub-inspectors – were made for the Railway Protection Force (RPF) under the Railway Ministry, though the vacancies were filled by the Home Ministry.

The CAPF comprises the Central Reserve Police Force, the Central Industrial Security Force, the Border Security Force, the Sashastra Seema Bal and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force, which are under the administrative and operational control of the Home Ministry. The Assam Rifles deployed along the Myanmar border is under the administrative control of the Home Ministry.

The recruitment of 10 lakh personnel in government departments and Ministries is to be completed in the next 18 months, just before the 2024 general elections are held.

'Agniveers can serve during wars'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Youth recruited in the armed forces under the short-term 'Agnipath' scheme can be called back if the situation demands, particularly in case of a full-fledged war, Lt. General K.K. Repswal, Chief of Staff, Eastern Command, said on Wednesday.

"It will be trained pool available to you and if the situation so demands they can be called back," Mr. Repswal said.

Asked about whether women can be part of the new scheme, Lt. General Respwal said that once the scheme stabilises "girls will get a chance".

Party leaders, veterans say Army morale may be harmed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI/GHAZIABAD

The 'Agnipath' scheme has drawn flak from various political parties and some veterans. On Wednesday, a large number of aspirants to the armed forces blocked roads and railway tracks in different parts of Bihar to protest against the new scheme.

Earlier, responding to a media query, Union Minister and former Army chief General V.K. Singh said he was not involved in formulating the scheme and that he did not know much about it.

Targeting the Central government, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said on Twitter, "When India faces threats on two fronts, the uncalled-for 'Agnipath' scheme reduces the operational effectiveness of our armed forces. The BJP govt. must stop compromising the dignity, traditions, valour & discipline of our forces."

Sitaram Yechury of the CPI(M) tweeted: "Instead of raising a professional Army, Modi govt. proposes 'soldiers on contract' to save pension money! Training contract soldiers with no other prospects after 3-5 years but to serve private militias! Scrap this anti national scheme." Rashtriya Lok Dal president Chaudhary Jayant Singh said temporary recruitment in Army will be detrimental to the discipline and morale of the Army.

Former Northern Army Command chief Lieutenant-General D.S. Hooda (retd.) told *The Hindu*: "Obviously, like any other scheme, there are some advantages... junior leaders would get better, the government will save on the budget expenses. There are certain challenges as well, of people having apprehensions about the training period; whether the ethos would be strong enough, morale motivation would be as strong as that of those who serve for a longer period of time."

Lieutenant General Zameer Uddin Shah (retd.) described the 'Agnipath' scheme as a "retrograde step" and "the most detrimental measure inflicted on armed forces."

"Let's not destroy our institutions," tweeted Major General G.D. Bakshi (retd.).

3-year degree programme for *Agnipath* recruits

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

A day after the Cabinet approved the 'Agnipath' scheme for temporary recruitment to the armed forces, the Union Education Ministry on Wednesday said it will launch a three-year degree programme that will give credits to serving defence personnel who avail themselves of the scheme.

The aim is to "enhance the future career prospects of our 'Agniveers', and equip them for various job roles in the civilian sector and recognise the skill training received" by them during their defence tenure, the Ministry said.

Under the programme that will be designed and executed by IGNOU, 50% of the credits required for the graduate degree will come from skills received under the 'Agnipath' scheme, and the remaining 50% will come from a basket of courses that cover a wide variety of subjects like languages, economics, history, political science, public administration, sociology, mathematics, education, commerce, tourism, vocational studies, agriculture, environmental studies, English communication and astrology.

MoU for programme

IGNOU will enter into an MoU with the Army, the Navy and the Indian Air Force to offer the programme to their personnel. The course has been recognised by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) and the UGC, the Ministry of Education said. It will be recognised in India and abroad.

The programme will conform with UGC norms as well as those laid down under the National Skill Qualification Framework as part of the National Education Policy, 2020.

Those who apply for the programme will also have the provision of multiple exit points under which they will get an undergraduate certificate on completion of the first year, an undergraduate diploma on completion of the first two years and a degree on completion of all the three years.

Rajnath dials Mamata, Kharge, Naveen

Defence Minister and BJP chief contact key political leaders and parties over Presidential election

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and BJP president J.P. Nadda on Wednesday began the consultation process, on behalf of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), for the upcoming election for the next President of India by dialling key Opposition leaders, NDA allies and neutral parties such as the Biju Janata Dal (BJD).

Mr. Singh and Mr. Nadda have been empowered by the BJP to undertake this process of consultation, even as 17 Opposition parties held a meeting to arrive at a common candidate to be fielded by them for the poll.

Among the leaders whom Mr. Singh spoke to included Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha and senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav. Among NDA allies, Mr. Singh spoke to Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Talk time: A file photo of Rajnath Singh and J.P. Nadda with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

He also spoke to Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik whose party, the BJD, is equidistant from both the NDA and the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), but who is expected to go with the NDA on the Presidential poll.

Mr. Singh is also in touch with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, and is expected to reach out to BSP chief Mayawati, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Sharad Pawar, former Prime Minister and Janata Dal (S) leader H.D. Deve Gowda and AIADMK leader O. Panneerselvam.

Sources said the Opposition leaders asked Mr. Singh about the BJP-led NDA's nominee for the Presidential election, when he put a question on whether the Opposition had any suggestions to offer. "Our response was that the NDA should share its ideas over who they thought would be the ruling alliance's candidate," a source said.

Mr. Nadda is also in touch with the DMK, the NPP, the NC, the AJSU and the Nagaland People's Front.

During the meeting convened by Ms. Banerjee, at least two more names emerged – National Conference supremo Farooq Abdullah and Gopalkrishna Gandhi – after Mr. Pawar declined to be a candidate.

The election for the President will be held on July 18, while the nomination process began on Wednesday.

The incumbent Ram Nath Kovind's term ends on July 24.

11 nominations filed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Eleven people filed their nominations on the first day on Wednesday for the Presidential election to be held on July 18. One of the nominations was rejected for want of proper papers.

Among the candidates is a Lalu Prasad Yadav from Saran in Bihar, not to be confused with his namesake and Rashtriya Janata Dal chief. Some of the nominations filed were from individuals who have contested the Presidential poll as well as other elections several times. K. Padmarajan from Salem, Tamil Nadu; Jeevan Kumar Mittal from Moti Nagar in Delhi; and Sairo Bano Mohammad Patel and her husband Mohammad A. Hamid Patel are among the contestants.

Cong. resorting to protest to hide corruption: BJP

It points to the progressive decline of the party: Trivedi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday accused the Congress of resorting to violent protests to "hide" its corruption, stating that the Opposition party's protest against the summoning of Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in an alleged case of graft shows its "progressive decline", the true "satya" of the "satyagraha" the Congress claimed it was undertaking on the issue.

BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi

At a press conference in New Delhi, BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi pointed out to Mahatma Gandhi's decision to call off the Congress-led non-cooperation movement due to violence, and contrasted it with the "violent protests" by the Congress opposing the investigation in a case of corruption. Mr. Trivedi noted that the Congress leader, who is being questioned by the ED in the *National Herald* case, is neither the party's president nor the Leader of the Opposition. He questioned the Congress's show of strength for him. Both Chief Ministers belonging to the party (CMs of Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh Ashok Gehlot and Bhupesh Baghel) and most of its MPs are in Delhi as part of the Congress's protests against the ED's summons to the former party president.

Mr. Gandhi appeared before the ED for the third consecutive day on Wednesday for questioning in the *National Herald* money laundering case, with the agency seeking answers on decisions taken with regard to the media organisation and its owner Young Indian.

Congress leaders and workers staged protests outside the ED office and the party headquarters here and were detained by the police. Several Youth Congress and Mahila Congress workers protesting outside the party office on Akbar Road were roughed up by the police and taken away, the party said.

SC to hear today pleas on demolitions

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled on Thursday to hear separate petitions filed against the demolition drives, especially the destruction of homes in Uttar Pradesh of people allegedly linked to the riots that broke out following objectionable remarks made by two now-sacked BJP leaders against Prophet Muhammed.

A Vacation Bench of Justices A.S. Bopanna and Vikram Nath will hear two petitions filed by the Jamiat. The first alleges that bulldozers in several States targeted only one community after incidents of communal violence. This petition was filed in the top court shortly after the demolition drive in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri following communal violence in April.

The second petition filed by the Muslim body concerns the recent destruction of homes in Uttar Pradesh in the aftermath of Prophet remarks row. Jamiat has alleged that authorities began to demolish the houses without even giving people an opportunity to be heard. The petition has asked the court to direct initiation of action against officials responsible. It has urged the court to direct the authorities to stop any further demolition from being carried out in violation of the due process of law.

Demolition drives may challenge the rule of law

Petitions have alleged that they violate Article 300A

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The recent demolition drives in the aftermath of the row over the remarks on Prophet Muhammed may challenge certain basic tenets of law, including the right of a person to be heard first, and that the state can deprive a person of his or her property only after following due procedure and under the authority of a valid law as mandated under Article 300A of the Constitution.

A house being demolished in Prayagraj. • PTI

"The right to property under Article 300A is a human right," former Supreme Court judge Justice V. Gopala Gowda told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

Justice Gowda is one of the 12 signatories of a letter urging the Supreme Court to take *suo motu* cognisance of the demolitions in Uttar Pradesh. The letter conveyed that razing buildings without giving affected persons prior notice or hearing them first was a violation of the rule of law. Rule of law is a basic feature of the Constitution.

The letter quoted media reports of the Chief Minister "exhorting officials to take such action against those guilty that it sets an example so that no one commits a crime or takes law into their hands in future". It contended that the "coordinated manner in which the police and development authorities have acted lead to the clear conclusion that demolitions are a form of collective extrajudicial punishment, attributable to a state policy which is illegal".

A plea by Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind in the Supreme Court contended that the "demolition of properties carried out by the Uttar Pradesh government in retaliation was in breach of the laws enacted by the State legislature itself".

It referred to Section 10 of the Uttar Pradesh (Regulation of Building Operations) Act of 1958 which mandates that a building should not be demolished without giving the affected parties "a reasonable opportunity of being heard".

Section 27 of the Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act, 1973 requires the affected person to be heard and given 15 days' prior notice before proceeding with the demolition. Besides this, the Act allows a person aggrieved with the order of demolition to appeal within 30 days.

A former Madras High Court judge, Justice K. Chandru, said Article 300A is a "potent" right. He said demolitions were a product of the "politicisation of the bureaucracy". Justice Chandru said acts such as demolition were a "nuclear button" held against "problem creators".

"It is like cause and effect. If these people have violated building laws, give them a chance to be heard, give them notice... Immediate demolitions without court orders hark back to the Emergency days," Justice Chandru said.

A slew of Supreme Court decisions on Article 300A, including in the *Indian Handicrafts Emporium* case, has held that right to property was also a "constitutional right".

Article 300A was inserted shortly after the Emergency through the Constitution (44th Amendment) Act of 1978.

Mere executive fiats cannot be used to take away a person's property, the court has held. While it is inherent for a sovereign state to exercise its power of eminent domain over private property, the deprivation of the property should be for a public purpose and was subject to judicial review.

Adequate fuel stocks available: oil firms

Don't resort to panic buying, state-run companies urge customers

N. RAVI KUMAR
HYDERABAD

Fuel retailers Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) have urged customers not to resort to panic buying as sufficient petrol and diesel stocks are available.

The appeal came as petroleum dealers continued to complain about not being given adequate supplies on time.

The state-run companies, who between them command the lion's share of fuel sales, sought to reiterate the fuel availability.

"There is sufficient product availability and supplies to retail outlets are being met in line with demand. Request not to panic. We reassure our full commitment to serve you at all times without interruption," IOC Director (Marketing) V. Satish Kumar tweeted.

BPCL and HPCL, whose outlets have been under the limelight ever since dealers last month accused the companies of rationing fuel supplies, said there was adequate product availability and supplies across their network in all markets, and cited an unprecedented growth in fuel demand at retail outlets in a few States.

Contesting oil refiners' assertions, some dealers and their associations pointed to issues, including short to no supplies for some outlets in Haryana, and how one of the companies had been unable to execute indents placed three or four days in advance with full payment in Uttar Pradesh.

In a post on Twitter, one dealer said that Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab and many more States were suffering 'dry outs' due to a lack of diesel supply by oil firms.

Senior officials of the firms contended that any incidents of 'stock outs' at outlets were not on account of curtailed supplies.

They have averred that any such incidents were tied to dealers who were unable to pay upfront for indents after BPCL and HPCL had withdrawn credit facilities.

People at a fuel station in Mumbai.

Leaders of petroleum dealers' association, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, asserted that while the withdrawal of the credit facility was indeed an issue, oil companies were for their part not honouring all the indents placed with them and also taking time to supply.

Dual pricing

The leaders as well as oil company officials, who did not wish to be identified, said at the heart of the issue was the dual pricing of diesel, with supplies to bulk consumers such as road transport corporations priced at about ₹25 higher per litre.

This was leading to bulk consumers fuelling at retail outlets, thus resulting in a 'loss' for the oil companies.

Compounding the problem for the oil marketers was an apparent lack of 'real freedom' to price petrol and diesel in tandem with crude oil prices, despite the government technically having ostensibly deregulated product prices.

The OMCs also pointed to a surge in retail sales as most fuel outlets of private retailers were no longer operational.

On increased sales, BPCL said it was on account "of shifting of customers, due to reported lack of supplies or higher prices at private marketing companies' fuel stations".

In Tamil Nadu, oil industry sources said closure of private retailers' outlets had led to higher demand for products at bunks of PSU companies, especially those of HPCL and BPCL, which was increasingly becoming difficult to manage. It is not customers who are hit, as dealers too said they are feeling the heat of inflation and want their commission to be increased.

(With inputs from Deepa H. Ramakrishnan in Chennai)

Prayagraj police put up posters of suspects

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The police in Prayagraj on Wednesday started putting up posters of people accused of violence during the protest in the city last Friday against the controversial comments made by a former BJP spokesperson on Prophet Muhammed.

Based on CCTV footage of the protest as well as investigation of the case, the police had found more than 40 persons throwing stones or indulging in arson, Ajay Kumar, Senior Superintendent of Police, Prayagraj, said.

These persons identified by the police were absconding, the officer said, adding that the posters would be put up in the area of the incident, as well at the railway station, bus stops and on social media for their identification. The police have so far arrested 97 persons.

Across Uttar Pradesh, the police have arrested 357 persons.

BJP expels Rajasthan MLA for cross-voting

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday expelled its Rajasthan MLA Shobharani Kushwah for cross-voting in favour of a Congress candidate in the elections to four Rajya Sabha seats from the State held recently.

Ms. Kushwah, elected from the Dholpur constituency in 2018, had turned defiant after her suspension from the party last week.

In a letter to Ms. Kushwah, the BJP central disciplinary committee's member secretary, Om Pathak, said a separate action would be initiated against her for showing indiscipline. "You have publicly levelled unrestrained and unverified allegations against the party leadership instead of giving a clarification," the letter stated.

The BJP had fielded former Minister Ghanshyam Tiwari as its official candidate in the Rajya Sabha elections and extended support to media baron Subhash Chandra, who contested as an Independent. Ms. Kushwah, who was asked to vote for Mr. Chandra, ended up cross-voting for Pramod Tiwari of the Congress, causing embarrassment to both Mr. Chandra and the BJP.

Mr. Pathak said in the letter that since Ms. Kushwah's act was in violation of the BJP's Constitution, she would be relieved of all other roles in the organisation, apart from her expulsion from the party.

TAMIL NADU TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LTD
Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)

Sl.No	Tender Inviting Authority	Specification No	Total
1	CE/Tr. Pr.-I	040	1

For details of works / Procurement / Due date of submission / opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit website www.tantransco.gov.in, www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app, www.matcaconnerce.com/eprochome/tneb
DIPR/2818/Tender/2022

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
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Corporate Identification Number : U40109PB2010SGC033813,
Website www.pspcl.in
Contact Number : 96461-18774)

Tender Enquiry No. MQP-201/2022-23/PO(M) — Dated : 13.06.2022

Chief Engineer / Metering, C-3, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala, invites E-tender for Design, Supply, Testing, Commissioning, Integration, Reading, Analysis and 5 year O&M of 5 lacs 1ST Marked LT AC, Single Phase 2-wire, Whole Current, DLMS compliant (Category D-1) Static Intelligent Energy Smart Meters of rating 10-60 Amps (or better), 50Hz, 240 V of Accuracy Class-1(in default Pre-Paid mode) with 'Optical Port', AMI system & Communication infrastructure with a network plateform across Punjab. For detailed NIT and tender specification, please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 13.06.2022 from 07:00 PM onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in.

C 228/22 — 76155/12/921/2021/14957

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
YOUTH WELFARE AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
SPORTS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF TAMIL NADU
TENDER NOTICE

Tenders are invited by the Member Secretary, **Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu towards the Selection of Agencies for identifying Sponsorships for the 44th Chess Olympiad.**
The tender document (RFP) can be downloaded at free of cost from SDAT website **www.sdat.tn.gov.in** from **15.06.2022, 13:00 hrs.**
Pre-bid meeting is scheduled online on **20.06.2022 at 11:30 hrs** through **Video Conferencing (VC)** by SDAT and the link for the VC can be referred in the RFP.
EMD for an amount of **Rs.1,00,000/-** has to be paid through DD mode. Last date and time for online submission of bids is **22.06.2022 till 16:00 hrs.** Technical Bid shall be opened on **22.06.2022 at 16:30 hrs.**
DIPR/2823/Tender/2022
Chief Executive Officer / Member Secretary, SDAT.

SMART CITY THIRUVANANTHAPURAM LIMITED
CIN U75302KL2017SGC050027
TENDER NOTICE
E-Tenders are invited for the following project of Smart City Thiruvananthapuram Limited Project Area 1) Selection of Contractor for Design, Manufacturing, Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Automated Multilevel Mechanized Parking System at A Block, behind Saphalyam complex, Palayam on EPC Mode.

Sl. No	NAME OF PROJECT	TENDER ID	PAC AMOUNT (EXCLUSIVE OF GST)
1	Selection of Contractor for Design, Manufacturing, Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Automated Multilevel Mechanized Parking System at A Block, behind Saphalyam complex, Palayam on EPC Mode	2022_SCTLT_495007_1	Rs. 27,04,92,744/-

Bid Submission Last Date: 07th July 2022, Thursday, 5:30PM
Date and Time of Opening Price Bid: To Be Intimated Separately to Technically Qualified Bidders by e-mail.
All the RFP documents and details are available on https://www.smartcitytvm.in/
(Sd/-) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
SMART CITY THIRUVANANTHAPURAM Ltd.

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS : TIRUPATI
TIRUPATI DIST., Office of the Chief Engineer TENDER NOTICE
Adv.No.16/DS/CE/TTD/2022-23 Date: 13-06-2022
Offline Request for proposal (RFP) are invited for the following TTD Project on BOOT basis.

NIT No.	Name of the work	Estimate Amount Rs. in Lakhs & Time for completion	Tender Schedule Issue starts from	Due date for submission of Tender Documents
1	2	3	4	5
Superintending Engineer-III				
22/SE-III/TTD/2022-23	Setting up of Mini Dairy plant 5000 LPD in S.V.Gosamraksha nashala premises, TTD, Tirupati to process milk into milk products for 10 years under BOOT Basis.	Request for Proposal	18-06-2022 5.00 p.m.	05-07-2022 3.00 p.m.

Note: Request for proposals are invited for the above work in off line mode:
For full details log on to the Website https://www.tirumala.org.
Rec.No.PR4/13943/Adv.No.86/PRO/2022, Dated:15-06-2022 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION, ERNAKULAM JN

1. TENDER NOTICE No. 06-CE-CN-ERS-2022-OT, DATED: 09.06.2022
Name of Work: **Construction of Road Over Bridges;** Tender Value : ₹ 1240.58 Lakhs; Bid Security: ₹ 770300/-; Completion Period: 12 Months.
2. TENDER NOTICE No. 07-CE-CN-ERS-2022-OT, DATED: 09.06.2022
Name of Work: **Construction of ROB;** Tender Value : ₹ 464.18 Lakhs; Bid Security: ₹ 382100/-; Completion Period: 12 Months.
3. TENDER NOTICE No. 08-CE-CN-ERS-2022-OT, DATED: 09.06.2022
Name of Work: **Elimination of causeway, earthwork etc.;** Tender Value : ₹ 2653.44 Lakhs; Bid Security: ₹ 1476700/-; Completion Period: 12 Months.
4. TENDER NOTICE No. 09-CE-CN-ERS-2022-OT, DATED: 09.06.2022
Name of Work: **Construction of ROB;** Tender Value : ₹ 1434.57 Lakhs; Bid Security: ₹ 867300/-; Completion Period: 15 Months.
5. TENDER NOTICE No. 10-CE-CN-ERS-2022-OT, DATED: 09.06.2022
Name of Work: **Construction of Platform, earth work etc;** Tender Value : ₹ 1895.56 Lakhs; Bid Security: ₹ 1097800/-; Completion Period: 15 Months.
6. TENDER NOTICE No. 11-CE-CN-ERS-2022-OT, DATED: 09.06.2022
Name of Work: **Transportation of Permanent way materials;** Tender Value : ₹ 455.33 Lakhs; Bid Security: ₹ 377700/-; Completion Period: 18 Months.

Date and time of tender closing: 04.07.2022
Complete details and tender document will be available at https://www.ireps.gov.in
Chief Engineer / Construction / Ernakulam Jn.
Follow us on : twitter.com/GMSRailway

भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद
Indian Council of Agricultural Research
केन्द्रीय समुद्री मात्स्यिकी अनुसंधान संस्थान
Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute
CMFRI
Celebrating 75 Glorious Years of Marine Fisheries & Mariculture Research

F. No. 14-5/2019-Cdn. Dated:16.06.2022
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
Tender Enquiry No. ITMU/CMFRI/DL-4/2022-2023
The Director, Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, PB No. 1603, Ernakulam North P.O., Kochi-682 018 invites sealed tenders from the competitive bidders to out-license **Cadalmin™ LivCure extract (Cadalmin™ LCe) to combat non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NFALD)** developed by ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute. Tender document issued by this office or downloaded from our official website (www.cmfri.org.in) only be accepted. **Interested registered companies** (private or public) with proven track record may send the tender by post in the prescribed format (as detailed at our official web site www.cmfri.org.in) to the address **(The Director, Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, PB No. 1603, Ernakulam North P.O., Kochi-682 018 Kerala. (Kind attention: Assistant Administrative Officer-Coordination)** from 25 days of publication of the advertisement.
Director, ICAR-CMFRI

INTERVIEW | DONALD LU

'India is a global security power, and this is in U.S. interests'

The two countries share a common view of the security of Asia and of the world, says U.S. State Department's Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

The U.S. State Department's Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia, **Donald Lu**, *in a wide-ranging interview, discusses India's security role, human rights issues, visas and his forthcoming trip to Texas to engage with the South Asian diaspora and companies. Excerpts:*

On the State Department's push to engage domestically with the Indian and South Asian diaspora...

■ Well, I have had the great privilege of working on South Asia generally, but specifically India, since the mid-1990s. And what has been true then, and is very much true today, is that the heart of this relationship is not governments talking to each other. It's not even businesses talking to each other. It's families, right? It's the interconnectedness. We have a million people travelling back and forth between the United States and India every year. And so we want to channel that. We want to make sure that we are listening to the diaspora that we are responsive to their interests, but that we're also engaging them and being part of making this relationship fuller and more developed. They've got a lot of great ideas, particularly on the commercial side. And we want to make full use of that.

On reports of individuals in need of H-1B visa appointments at U.S. missions in India getting drop-box appointments that are far out in the future, sometimes in 2023. Is this something that you plan to look into?

■ Well, we know that there are delays in this process, but what I can also verify is it's getting better, not worse, that we're in touch with our colleagues, both staff at our visa sections in the many places that we offer services in India, as well as people looking at the metrics all throughout India and South Asia. And we see improvement week on week.

Yes, in a particular post, there may be a glitch that causes a delay of several additional weeks.

But as a whole, throughout the country, we're seeing wait times continue to go down...

So what are the challenges you are facing with not having a Senate-confirmed Ambassador in New Delhi, and how are you overcoming those challenges?

■ Well, we are really excited about the President's nominee, [Los Angeles Mayor] Eric Garcetti, going to New Delhi. I have been lucky enough in my career to work for both career State Department people who have been Ambassador in India, as well as political appointees chosen by the President. Eric Garcetti is someone who knows India well but he's also a leader in the United States and will represent our country with distinction there. It is taking longer than we would have liked. Our system is very slow. But I am confident within the next few months that we're going to have a confirmed Ambassador there. I know the Congress cares deeply about this. And the President does as well. I ask for a little patience on behalf of our Indian counterparts.

I think those who know the United States well, know that our process sometimes takes a little time. It's not untrue in many parts of the world, we're still waiting for our Ambassadors to be confirmed.

About the human rights dialogue between the United States and India: The government of India's response to the U.S. criticism of human rights violations in India has been that there is "vote bank politics" going on in the U.S. What is your response to this and has the dialogue between both countries progressed since the start of the Biden administration in terms of human rights?

We want to make sure that we are listening to the diaspora, that we are responsive to their interests

■ We've had several excellent discussions with the Indian government and I would say the Indian government is clear that they also have human rights concerns in the United States, particularly relating to the treatment of people of South Asian descent in the United States. So it goes both ways. And I think that's a healthy development that's happened in our relationship.

I'm a big believer that of the many countries I get to work on, or that I've worked on in my 30-year career, India has the most dynamic democracy, believes in the values that the United States does. So one of the things that I believe that we can do as a partner is to support Indian democratic institutions, your [India's] independent courts, your very free media – some would argue to free media; your robust civil society; that we should as a partner, look for ways that we can contribute to those democratic institutions, through exchanges, our judges and our prosecutors, training of journalists that goes both ways because, honestly, we have a lot to learn from Indian journalists and talking about how our civil society in America supports Indian civil society and vice versa. We have a lot, as democracies, we can do together. If we can do that successfully, I believe these democratic institutions will uphold human rights standards in India. I don't think it's going to be that foreign countries are able to fundamentally change how other foreign countries deal with human rights. But, I think if we can support these international institutions of democracy, that's really where we get the biggest bang for the buck, and that we can find ways to cooperate in support of our common goals on human rights and democracy.

We don't see much emphasis from the U.S. on the Indian Ocean part of the Indo-Pacific. Is that because the U.S. is building an understanding with India and its partners regarding security oversight of the Indian Ocean?

■ I would say it is completely accurate to say that the Indian Navy and the Indian military and the Indian government are very focused on the security of the Indian Ocean. I don't think it's right to say we don't care...that's not true at all. But we also have a lot of confidence that the Indian government, the military, are focused on the threats in the Indian Ocean, that you actually have a very robust Navy, that you are creating capabilities today that will ensure the security of this broader region, not just the Indian Ocean but far afield.

We see Indian naval vessels now transiting many parts of the globe. You are not only a security provider in the narrow Indian subcontinent, you are a global security power now, and that's what's in the interest of the United States – that you are militarily ready, but that you are also able to project that power far beyond your borders, because we are partners that share a common view of the security of Asia and of the world and we want India to be able to project that power. And we are working in very concrete ways, right now, between our militaries, to talk about how do we cooperate more intensively, which is complex, multi-services exercises, but it's also: How do we get our defence systems to work better together? How do we help India to develop but also to obtain some of the best defence equipment in the world?

Is a visit by President Biden to India on the cards such as, say, for the next Republic Day?

■ I am working every day to try to encourage my big boss, the President, to visit India. I have the honour of working in India when President Biden visited [Mr. Biden has visited India in the past, such as in 2013, when he was Vice-President] and when President Clinton visited as well. There is nothing like an American presidential visit to create warmth, goodwill and progress in a relationship. So I'm a huge supporter of this. I can't tell you a date because I can't speak for the White House, but we are working on this very closely with our Indian counterparts.

On the visa appointment issue again: You said the wait times are coming down. Can you commit to doing something proactively to bring those times down?

■ Throughout the pandemic, we weren't able to fully staff our visa sections because of limitations of the number of people allowed to come into our spaces. That has dramatically changed.

We are fully staffing – as of the summer – all of our visa sections throughout Mission India, and we're going to be able to see dramatic reductions in wait times over the next few months.

So everyone should stay tuned. Everyone has been so patient with us. I travel a lot. I know that visas really matter. We're going to see, over the course of the next few months, those wait times go back to a normal level from pre-pandemic. We're focused on that, I know that Indian families are focused on it.

(Full interview on bit.ly/donaldlu)

Panel to study vaccines data for 6-12 group

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation will meet on Thursday to review data on Covaxin and Corbevax vaccines for the six-12 age group and also deliberate on reducing the gap between the second and precaution doses from the current nine to six months.

The NTAGI will hold its meeting amid a fresh spike in COVID-19 cases.

The agenda for the NTAGI's Standing Technical Sub-Committee meeting includes discussion on a study by the Christian Medical College, Vellore, on the feasibility of allowing precaution dose of a COVID-19 vaccine separate from the one used for primary vaccination, the COVID burden in paediatric population, and long-term safety of Zy-CoV-D vaccine, official sources said.

The drug regulator in April granted emergency use authorisation for Corbevax made by Biological E for those aged five to 12 and Covaxin of Bharat Biotech for those in the age group of six to 12.

Nursing degree with add-on Ayurveda soon

Nursing Council to give approval to course by year-end

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

India is all set to unveil its first integrated Ayurveda nursing degree as an add-on to Allopathy or conventional nursing programme in an effort to offer the best of integrated medicine benefits to patients. Offered to nurses trained in Allopathy, the Ayurveda component will be a year-long add-on training capsule with specific subjects and hands-on training.

The proposal, which is in the last phase of its approval with the Nursing Council of India, is expected to become a reality by this year-end.

The syllabus has been created by the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), the apex tertiary care centre for Ayurveda in the country, said AIIA Director Tanuja Nesari, who added that this will be "a first of its kind programme which will be a breakthrough in integrative health care".

Giving details of the initiative, Rajagopala S., medical superintendent, AIIA, said nursing care was one of the four important pillars of health care and the integrated knowledge of both the therapies would be an asset.

The Ayurveda component will be a year-long training capsule. • GETTY IMAGES

"The syllabus has been prepared by top professionals in both allopathic and Ayurveda fields and the intake will be of nursing graduates who have finished their allopathic training. The syllabus has been submitted to the Nursing Council and the council has had several rounds of meetings on the issue," he said.

"If all goes well, we should be able to offer the course soon. Besides the AIIA, institutes that have the infrastructure and manpower to conduct the course will be offering this to students," he added.

Residency programme

Sindhu Rajesh, nursing superintendent at the AIIA, said this would be a residency programme where students would take theory classes and work in hospital for hands-on training.

"We are proposing a 80:20 ratio of practical and theory," she said, adding that the syllabus had been approved in-principle and the suggestions made by the council had been incorporated. The draft syllabus was now undergoing the approval process.

"The idea is to provide holistic and rigorous medical care for patients," she said. "The notification for the course could come in by August-end if all goes well," Ms. Rajesh said.

India currently offers Ayurveda nursing for those having finished Class 12 with science subjects.

2 LeT militants killed in J&K encounter

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Two Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militants, one of them involved in the targeted killing of a bank manager from Rajasthan, were killed in an overnight encounter in south Kashmir's Shopian on Wednesday.

"One of the killed terrorists has been identified as Jan Mohd Lone of Shopian. Besides other terror crimes, he was involved in the recent killing of Vijay Kumar, a bank manager, on May 2, 2022 in Kulgam district," Inspector-General of Police Vijay Kumar said.

The second slain terrorist has been identified as Tufail Ganai. "Incriminating materials, arms and ammunition, including an AK-47 rifle and a pistol, were recovered from the site of encounter," the police said.

The duo was trapped by the security forces during an anti-militancy operation in Shopian's Kanjiular area.

Meanwhile, the security forces have engaged a group of hiding militants in south Kashmir's Kulgam. "Exchange of fire is on in the area," the police said.

75 transformed urban spaces to be models for accessibility

NIUA provides examples of fully implemented guidelines

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

Seventy-five projects of transformed urban spaces, including waterfronts, transit hubs and markets or plazas, selected by the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) in a recently released compendium, would serve as examples where harmonised guidelines on accessibility are fully implemented, Director, NIUA, Hitesh Vaidya said.

Well planned: A view of the Pondy Bazaar pedestrian plaza in Chennai, a public space included in the compendium.

The e-book, *Transforming Urban Landscape in India*, released on June 6 by the NIUA, covered 75 completed projects to mark 75 years of Independence. The compendium included reimagined public spaces, including the Marine Drive walkway redevelopment in Kochi, Neela Hauz Biodiversity Park and Raahgiri Day in Delhi, the M.G. Road boulevard in Bengaluru, and the Pondy Bazaar pedestrian plaza in Chennai.

Now, Mr. Vaidya said, the projects would be used as examples for other cities to learn from.

Mr. Vaidya said the projects selected for the compendium would be the spaces where the government's Harmonised Guidelines and Standards for Universal Accessibility in India that is in the process of being updated will be implemented. "Going forward, we want these public spaces to be the model where our harmonised guidelines are implemented fully. The point is to learn, not duplicate," Mr. Vaidya said.

A draft version of the guidelines prepared by a team from Indian Institute of Technology-Roorkee and the NIUA was published by the Central Public Works Department in 2021, updating the existing accessibility guidelines notified in 2016. The new guidelines are yet to be rolled out, so the 2016 standards are still applicable.

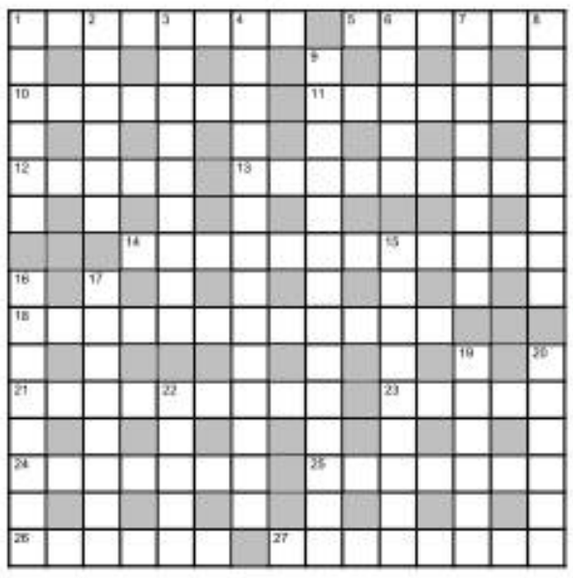
Speaking about the book, Mr. Vaidya said: "The main reasons behind this e-book are to nudge all States and cities that if these cities can do it, then we can do it, and then people who will see it will put pressure on their own cities as well...Our cities require open spaces and not concrete jungles. Open spaces will contribute to the larger goal of net zero and be the first baby step towards it."

TH CROSSWORD + 13584

(set by Dr. X)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN



ACROSS

1 A little boy catching gnat-like fly (8)
5 Summon fool endlessly drinking liquor (4,2)
10 Bundle containing convict's rifle (7)
11 Like smooth flow of beat by popular artist in retreat (7)
12 Exasperated by four through cover (5)
13 Large antelope chasing nocturnal mammal around plateau (9)
14 Memorisation without understanding is rubbish and idiotic in general (4,8)
18 Where marathoner might be participating eventually (2,3,4,3)
21 Citizens in depression, overwhelmed by endless struggle (9)
23 Yahoo hacked! Overwhelming commotion (3-2)
24 Destroy syndicate essentially involved in destroying nature (7)
25 Repeating point, member ignored harangue (7)
26 Couple of girls in vigorous wrangle (6)
27 Africans in union also involved in reviewing problem (8)

DOWN

1 Ebullient president, clever to accumulate stock (6)
2 Enamoured by writer's third novel, fantastic (2,4)
3 Impressive broadcast organised (9)
4 How some drugs are sold in public by predator controlling drug business (4,3,7)
6 Mare turned to eat one plant (5)
7 Guy meeting most audacious high-ranking official (8)
8 Page with elaborate diagram showing prototype (8)
9 Fat boy's rage about barb, shocking (14)
15 Uncouth expression of disgust by man in quarrel with nationalist (5-4)
16 Chief priest greeting queen with bow (8)
17 Hiding in silence, suppressed by corrupt government (8)
19 Person at auditorium conducting instrumental composition (6)
20 One praying in front of mosque, saint perhaps (6)
22 Drone in area around lake (5)

SUDOKU

		3	6	8		5		
	4		1			8		
8				2				
					8		5	
2	1						4	8
	9		2					
				3				5
		7			9		6	
		1		7	2	3		

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13583

C	U	B	I	S	T		S	C
O		A		K		L		A
M	O	N	E	Y	B	A	G	S
M		D		R	U		T	
E	N	A	M	O	U	R		L
R		G		C		E		E
C	L	E	R	K		L	A	S
E				E		A		I
	C	O	T	T	O	N	O	N
P		N				D		S
I	M	P	E	A	C	H		P
C		A		F		A		A
K	A	P	U	T		R	U	I
U		E		E		D		N
P	O	R	T	R	A	Y	S	

H	O	O	N	E	R			
	P		I		A			
	T	I	G	E	R			
	I		E		I			
	L	O	N	G	R	U	N	
		I			G			
	V	E	G	A	S			
	N				W			
	U	N	I	T	E			
	M		T		T			
	P	R	E	V	A	I	L	
	R		L		A			
R	U	I	N	A	T	I	O	N
	N		T		C		D	
G	E	A	S	E	S			

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

9	6	3	7	8	2	5	1	4
1	2	5	3	9	4	7	8	6
7	4	8	1	5	6	3	2	9
8	1	2	6	3	9	4	5	7
5	3	6	4	7	8	2	9	1
4	7	9	2	1	5	8	6	3
3	5	1	8	6	7	9	4	2
6	9	4	5	2	3	1	7	8
2	8	7	9	4	1	6	3	5

FAITH

Treasure trove of gunas

Parasara Bhatta was the chief priest in the Srirangam temple. He wrote a work called Sri Guna Ratna Kosa. Kosa in Sanskrit means a box. This box of Parasara Bhatta contains gunas. But whose gunas are there in this box? The qualities of Goddess Sridevi, and particularly Goddess Ranganayaki of Srirangam, constitute the treasure, said Thenthirupperai Aravindalochanan in a discourse.

The Vedas speak of Sri, and we have works like Sri Sukta, Bhu Sukta, Neela Sukta, Sradhha Sukta and Medha Sukta, all of which extol Her. But none could have sung of Her greatness the way Sri Vaishnava Acharyas did. Alavandar was the forerunner in this respect, with his Chatus Sloki. Here in just four verses, he succinctly speaks of Her qualities. The substance of Alavandar's work was subsequently elaborated by Kooratazhvan in his Sri Stava, which has eleven verses. Later Kooratazhvan's son Parasara Bhatta elaborated on the same ideas in his Guna Ratna Kosa, which has 61 verses. The first four verses of Guna Ratna Kosa are mangala slokas. If we recite or even listen to a recitation of Guna Ratna Kosa, we will be blessed by Lord Ranganatha. To earn His love, the best way would be for us to recite this work.

In the first verse, Bhatta says that the Lord being responsible for creation, protection and dissolution, is tired after all these activities! But the Goddess' glances of approval drive away the fatigue! A peacock spreads its feathers when it spots a peahen. Likewise, the Lord's delight lies in approval from His Consort. Vedanta Desika in his Sri Stuti says that Lakshmi's feet are adorned with a red dye. Since She resides in Lord Narayana's chest, Her feet leave a red mark on His chest. It is Her presence on His chest which identifies Him as the Supreme One.

Ukraine pleads with West for weapons

Russian focus lies on securing Donbas region

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LYSYCHANSK

Ukraine pleaded with Western governments on Wednesday to decide quickly on sending heavy weapons to shore up its faltering defences, as Russia said it would evacuate civilians from a frontline chemical plant.

The industrial city of Severodonetsk is under intense bombardment as Russia focuses its offensive on the Donbas region in an effort to secure a swathe of eastern and southern Ukraine.

Moscow's forces have intensified efforts to cut off beleaguered Ukrainian troops remaining in the city, and have said that they will open a corridor to allow civilians to flee the besieged factory.

Western Defence Ministers, including U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, were meeting at NATO headquarters in Brussels, under pressure to step up weapons shipments to Ukraine.

Need of the hour: Ukrainian forces firing a gun towards Russian positions in Donbas on Wednesday. •AFP

"Brussels, we are waiting for a decision," Mykhaylo Podolyak, senior aide to President Volodymyr Zelensky posted on social media, warning that Ukraine's artillery is outgunned by 10 to one.

'Training needed'

But NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg, hosting the meeting of around 50 allies and partners in Brussels, warned it would take time to get the latest hardware into service with trained Ukrainian troops.

"Ukraine is really in a very critical situation and therefore, it's an urgent need to step up," Mr. Stoltenberg told journalists ahead of a gathering of NATO ministers.

About 500 civilians are taking shelter in Severodonetsk's Azot chemical plant, according to the head of the city's administration.

The Russian Defence Ministry announced a humanitarian corridor would be established on Wednesday for evacuations from the plant, saying it was "guided by the principles of humanity".

Humanitarian corridor

Evacuees would be transported to the city of Svatovo in the separatist-held region of Lugansk, Moscow said, urging those holding out at the plant to cease their "senseless resistance".

There was no response from Kyiv to the announcement, and in a video address on Tuesday, Mr. Zelensky lamented "painful losses" in the ongoing fighting.

"But we must stay strong. This is our nation... Hanging in there in Donbas is crucial. Donbas is the key to deciding who will dominate in the coming weeks."

The Kremlin, meanwhile, said it had not received a request from London to intervene in the case of two Britons sentenced to death by pro-Moscow separatist authorities in eastern Ukraine.

Biden announces $1 bn in military aid for Kyiv

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden announced a new package of arms and ammunition for Ukraine on Tuesday after reaffirming Washington's support in a call with President Volodymyr Zelensky. The package includes more artillery, coastal anti-ship defense systems and ammunition for artillery and advanced rocket systems that Ukraine is already using. Mr. Biden said he "reaffirmed my commitment that the U.S. will stand by Ukraine as it defends its democracy,". Mr. Biden also announced $225 million worth of humanitarian assistance.

Xi reasserts support for Russia on security issues

Beijing, Moscow to support each other on core interests

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping reasserted his country's support for Russia on issues of sovereignty and security in a phone call with Russian leader Vladimir Putin on Wednesday, state media said.

Mr. Xi told Mr. Putin that "all parties should responsibly push for a proper settlement of the Ukraine crisis," according to the official *Xinhua News Agency*.

China has refused to criticise Russia's invasion of Ukraine or even to refer to it in such terms, while accusing NATO and the West of provoking Moscow into attacking.

Weeks before the Russian attack, Mr. Putin and Mr. Xi met in Beijing in February and oversaw the signing of an agreement pledging that relations between the sides would have "no limits." It remains unclear whether Mr. Xi knew at the time of Russia's plan to invade Ukraine.

Shared traits: Xi Jinping, right, has refused to criticise Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine. •FILE PHOTO

In that meeting, the two leaders pushed back against U.S. pressure, declaring their opposition to any expansion of NATO and affirming that the island of Taiwan is a part of China.

Mr. Xi told Mr. Putin on Wednesday that China "is willing to work with the Russian side to promote the steady and long-term development of bilateral pragmatic cooperation," *Xinhua* reported, "China is willing to, together with Russia, continue to support each other on issues concerning core interests and major concerns such as sovereignty and security."

While offering its tacit support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine, China has sought to appear neutral and avoid possible repercussions from supporting the Russian economy amid sanctions.

Egypt, Israel step in to boost gas supply to EU

Volume of imports not disclosed yet

ASSOCIATED PRESS
CAIRO

Egypt, Israel and the European Union on Wednesday signed a deal to increase liquified natural gas sales to EU countries, who aim to reduce their dependence on supplies from Russia as the war in Ukraine drags on.

The deal will see Israel send more gas via Egypt, which has facilities to liquify it for export by sea, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said.

"What a special moment," she said in a joint news conference alongside the Egyptian and Israel energy ministers. "I very warmly welcome the signing of this historic agreement."

Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi with Ursula von der Leyen in Cairo on Wednesday. •AP

Diversifying sources

Ms. Von der Leyen, who visited Israel earlier this week, said the agreement was part of Europe's efforts to diversify energy sources away from Russia and import hydrocarbons from "other trustworthy suppliers." She named Israel and Egypt who have emerged as gas exporters in recent years following major offshore discoveries.

Under the deal, the EU will help Egypt and Israel increase their gas production and exploration in their territorial waters. It was not immediately clear how much gas the EU will import from either country.

"It is known that the Russian war against Ukraine has exposed our European dependency on Russian fossil fuels and we want to get rid of this dependency," Ms. von der Leyen said later in a joint news conference with Egypt President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi.

Last year, the European Union imported roughly 40% of its gas from Russia and has had difficulty imposing sanctions on Russia over its ongoing invasion of Ukraine.

Israeli Energy Minister Karin Elharrar said the deal was a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which caused a European energy crisis. She said it also highlights increasing cooperation between Egypt and Israel, two former foes.

'Public statement'

"This is a statement to those who see in our region only negative forces such as division and conflict," Ms. Elharrar said.

Egyptian Petroleum Minister Tarek el-Molla described the deal as "an important milestone" for cooperation between Egypt, Israel and the EU. He said it will lead to further cooperation between members of the East Mediterranean Gas Forum.

According to the deal, the Israeli gas will be brought via pipeline to Egypt's LNG terminal in the Mediterranean Sea before being transported by tanker to European shores, Israel's Energy Ministry said.

Reduced Russian gas flow is political, says German official

Vice-Chancellor refutes Moscow's claim of a technical snag

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BERLIN

Russia's announcement that it would reduce natural gas flows through a key European pipeline by roughly 40% appears to be a political move rather than a result of technical problems, Germany's Vice-Chancellor said on Wednesday.

Russia's state-controlled energy giant Gazprom also told Italian gas giant Eni that it would reduce gas through a different pipeline by roughly 15% on Wednesday. The reason for the reduction has not been made clear, and the Italian company said it was monitoring the situation.

The reduced flows follow Russia's halt of natural gas supplies to Bulgaria, Poland, Finland, Netherlands, Denmark as Europe works to reduce its dependence on Russian energy amid the war in Ukraine. Gas demand has fallen after the end of the winter heating season, but European utilities are racing to refill storage ahead of next winter with prices high and supplies uncertain.

Gazprom said Tuesday that deliveries through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline to Europe would drop after Canadian sanctions over the war prevented German partner Siemens Energy from delivering overhauled equipment.

'Maintenance works'

Siemens Energy said a gas turbine that powers a compressor station on the pipeline had been in service for more than 10 years and taken to Montreal for a scheduled overhaul. But because of sanctions imposed by Canada, the company has been unable to return the equipment to the customer, Gazprom.

German Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck, who is also the country's Economy Minister and responsible for energy, told reporters in Berlin that he had established with the European Union's executive Commission that the maintenance of Siemens compressor stations on the pipeline isn't subject to EU sanctions.

He said officials are in contact with Canada to check what is possible under Ottawa's sanctions. But he added that, as far as German officials know, the first "relevant" maintenance session isn't due until the fall, and because there are several such installations, that wouldn't explain a 40% reduction.

"So I also have the impression that what happened yesterday is a political decision, and not a decision that is technically justifiable," Mr. Habeck said.

He said there's no supply problem in Germany, which gets about 35% of its natural gas to power industry and generate electricity from Russia, and it should be able to keep filling up reserves.

In a first, Japan to be part of NATO summit

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said on Wednesday he will attend this month's NATO summit in Madrid, becoming the country's first leader to join a top meeting of the transatlantic alliance.

The June 28-30 gathering is seen as a crunch moment for the 30 North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies, four months into Russia's war in Ukraine.

Sweden and Finland, which have applied to join NATO, are sending delegations to the summit, and South Korea's new President Yoon Suk-yeol will also be the first leader from his country to attend.

Japan, a key U.S. ally and not a NATO member, has delivered defensive supplies to Ukraine and imposed tough sanctions on Russia.

"As the only Asian country in the G7, Japan's diplomatic capabilities are being tested," Mr. Kishida told reporters.

Give written assurances to join NATO: Turkey

Sweden and Finland's bids hang fire

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ANKARA

Turkey said on Wednesday that it was waiting for a "written response" from Sweden and Finland to Ankara's objections to their NATO bids.

"We have transmitted our questions in writing to these two countries," Turkey Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told reporters.

"Now we're waiting for their written responses," he said.

The two Nordic countries reversed decades of military non-alignment by applying for NATO memberships in May, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Any NATO membership deal must, however, be unanimously approved by all 30 members of the alliance, and Turkey has thrown a spanner in the works

Ankara is accusing the Nordic neighbours of providing a safe haven for the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), listed as a "terrorist" group by Turkey and its Western allies.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Turkey President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told members of his party on Wednesday that "as long as Sweden and Finland don't adopt concrete measures on the fight against terrorism, our position will not change."

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg had said that NATO was working "hard and actively" to resolve Turkey's concerns.

Finland's Prime Minister Sanna Marin acknowledged that the Nordic bids could stall if agreement with Turkey is not reached before a summit later in June.

EU initiates legal action against U.K.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRUSSELS

The European Commission launched new legal action against Britain on Wednesday, accusing London of putting peace in Northern Ireland at risk by trying to overhaul the post-Brexit trade deal.

"The U.K. government tabled legislation confirming its intention to unilaterally break international law," EU commission vice-president Maros Sefcovic said.

"More precisely to break an agreement that protects peace and stability in Northern Ireland," Mr. Sefcovic said.

"Opening the door to unilaterally changing an international agreement is a breach of international law, as well. So let's call a spade a spade. This is illegal," Mr. Sefcovic added.

In London, Prime Minister Boris Johnson's spokesman told journalists: "We are disappointed that the EU has taken this legal action today."

And he insisted that European proposals to resolve the impasse were a "step backwards".

On Monday, the British government introduced legislation to rip up post-Brexit trading rules for Northern Ireland, in an attempt to override the EU withdrawal treaty that it had signed.

China lifts COVID-19 visa ban on Indians

Requests of students under process; tourist, private visas still suspended

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BEIJING

China has announced plans to provide visas to Indian professionals and their families stranded in India for over two years following the strict visa restrictions imposed by Beijing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Separately, China is also processing requests of thousands of Indian students studying in Chinese universities who have conveyed their interest to re-join their colleges and universities.

On Monday, the Chinese Embassy in India updated its COVID-19 visa policy after over two years to accept visa applications of foreign nationals and their accompanying family members wanting to go to China for resumption of work in all fields.

It is a big relief for hundreds of Indian professionals and their families who are stuck back home since 2020.

Besides the Indians, the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi said family members of Chinese citizens and foreigners with Chinese permanent residence permits going to China for family reunions or visiting relatives can apply for visas.

Besides Indians some of whom have Chinese spouses, many Chinese employees working for various companies were also stranded in India due to Beijing's blanket visa bans and flight cancellations.

However, visas for tourism and private purposes remain suspended, the Chinese Embassy announcement said.

In April, after prolonged representations from India, China agreed to permit the return of "some" stranded Indian students and asked the Indian Embassy here to collect the details of the students wanting to return.

WTO makes final push for trade deals

REUTERS
GENEVA

The World Trade Organization on Wednesday extended its negotiations by a day amid growing doubts they would find consensus on any change to global trade rules and India adamant it would not yield on food, fisheries and vaccines.

During the WTO's ministerial conference this week, its first major meeting in over four years originally set to end on June 15, the 164-member body is seeking to agree on a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a reduction of fishing subsidies, pledges on food security and the launch of an internal reform.

New turn in Saudi's war against homosexuality

Officials seize rainbow-coloured toys

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RIYADH

Saudi officials are seizing rainbow-coloured toys and articles of clothing from shops in the capital as part of a crackdown on homosexuality, state media reported.

Targeted items include rainbow-coloured bows, skirts, hats and pencil cases, most of them apparently manufactured for young children, according to a report broadcast on Tuesday evening by the state-run *Al-Ekhbariya* news channel.

"We are giving a tour of the items that contradict the Islamic faith and public morals and promote homosexual colours targeting the younger generation," says an official from the Commerce Ministry.

Gesturing towards a rainbow flag, a journalist says: "The homosexuality flag is present in one of the Riyadh markets."

The colours send a "poisoned message" to children, the report says.

Homosexuality is a potential capital offence in Saudi Arabia.

In April, the kingdom said it had asked Disney to cut "LGBTQ references" from *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, the latest Marvel movie, but that Disney had refused. The film ultimately did not screen in Saudi cinemas.

'Cutting chai': a tip to save economy

Pakistan Minister advises citizens to cut down on tea to reduce import bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD

Cash-strapped Pakistan has urged its countrymen to cut down on the consumption of tea to help reduce the import bill eating into the country's depleting foreign exchange reserves.

The appeal from Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal came after it emerged that Pakistan consumed tea worth $400 million in the fiscal year 2021-22, *The News International* newspaper reported.

He said that Pakistan, one of the biggest importers of tea in the world, has to borrow money to import it.

"I appeal to the nation to cut down the consumption of tea by 1-2 cups because we import tea on loan," Mr. Iqbal said while speaking to reporters here on Tuesday.

Greater good: The appeal came after it emerged that Pakistan consumed tea worth $400 million during 2021-22. •AFP

The federal Budget document for the outgoing fiscal year showed that Pakistan imported $60 million worth of more tea than the last fiscal year. In the fiscal year 2020-21, $340 million was spent on the import of tea, the *News Network International* news agency reported.

Mr. Iqbal's appeal to cut down the consumption of tea by one to two cups did not go down well with people as they started criticising him on Twitter.

"Did Ahsan Iqbal really ask the nation to cut down on chai? Did he honestly really ask us for that? Do they really think we're that stupid," a Twitter user said.

"Ahsan Iqbal urging the nation to cut down on chai im sorry but I can not be a part of this," another user named Zoha said in a tweet.

The planning Minister said the traders' community has also been asked to close markets by 8:30 p.m. to conserve energy.

Mr. Iqbal said this will help the country cut the import bill of petroleum products.

Shooter in U.S. charged for hate crime

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK

The U.S. Justice Department announced federal hate crimes charges against Payton Gendron, the 18-year-old who shot dead 10 African Americans at a Buffalo supermarket in May. The charges say Gendron was motivated by racist hate when, he killed 10 persons, while wounding three others.

MARKET WATCH

	15-06-2022	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,541	-0.29
US Dollar	78.22	-0.23
Gold	50,304	-0.33
Brent oil	120.06	-3.23

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	703.75	-0.95
Apollo Hosp	3722.70	16.50
Asian Paints	2661.15	25.75
Axis Bank	650.50	-0.25
Bajaj Auto	3698.10	16.35
Bajaj Finserv	11809.70	473.20
Bajaj Finance	5484.95	109.20
Bharti Airtel	682.10	0.05
BPCL	314.00	-0.30
Britannia Ind	3385.40	2.55
Cipla	968.80	4.10
Coal India	190.05	-2.15
Divis Lab	3581.10	55.45
Dr Reddys Lab	4135.50	24.45
Eicher Motors	2720.10	-2.65
Grasim Ind	1331.70	22.35
HCL Tech	989.90	-7.00
HDFC	2105.45	-4.05
HDFC Bank	1307.45	-4.55
HDFC Life	579.75	7.35
Hero MotoCorp	2605.30	47.70
Hindalco	357.50	-0.80
Hind Unilever	2146.55	-24.45
ICICI Bank	687.25	1.75
Indusind Bank	843.30	-0.90
Infosys	1422.20	-18.35
ITC	263.40	-2.05
JSW Steel	563.00	1.10
Kotak Bank	1736.65	-3.05
L&T	1560.35	15.70
M&M	1025.50	6.25
Maruti Suzuki	7853.45	41.80
Nestle India Ltd.	16802.30	-69.15
NTPC	148.15	-3.25
ONGC	151.40	-4.55
PowerGrid Corp	222.25	-1.70
Reliance Ind	2596.30	-31.80
SBI Life	1125.75	-6.35
State Bank	451.35	3.25
Shree Cement	19314.20	105.35
Sun Pharma	822.30	-2.75
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	737.75	1.90
Tata Motors	414.10	8.95
Tata Steel	959.55	-36.60
TCS	3206.30	-4.25
Tech Mahindra	1020.05	-10.10
Titan	2105.05	3.05
UltraTech Cement	5454.15	25.55
UPL	712.15	-3.55
Wipro	440.10	-5.80

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on June 15

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	77.87	78.19
Euro	81.07	81.40
British Pound	93.92	94.31
Japanese Yen (100)	57.81	58.05
Chinese Yuan	11.60	11.65
Swiss Franc	77.82	78.15
Singapore Dollar	55.90	56.14
Canadian Dollar	60.09	60.34
Malaysian Ringgit	17.64	17.72
Australian Dollar	53.94	54.17

Source: Indian Bank

Trade gap widens as imports surge 63%

Merchandise exports rose 21% to $38.94 bn in May; oil, coal, gold purchases lifted imports to $63.22 bn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India's merchandise exports in May rose by 20.6% to $38.94 billion, while the trade deficit ballooned to a record $24.29 billion, government data released on Wednesday show.

Imports surged 62.8% to $63.22 billion.

The trade deficit stood at $6.53 billion in the same month last year.

Cumulative exports in April-May 2022-23 rose by about 25% to $78.72 billion.

Imports in April-May climbed 45.4% to $123.41 billion, widening the trade deficit in the first two months of this fiscal to $44.69 billion, from $21.82 billion in the year-earlier period.

Commenting on the data, ICRA Ltd. chief economist Aditi Nayar said that the mild sequential dip in non-oil exports amid a sharp jump in gold imports widened India's merchandise trade deficit to $24 billion in May.

Lure of yellow metal: Gold imports vaulted to $6 billion, from $677 million in May 2021. • AFP

"Based on the expectation that gold imports may reduce after the Akshaya Tritiya season, the trade deficit may demonstrate some moderation in the current month," she said.

Ms. Nayar added that based on the performance in April-May 2022, "we foresee the current account deficit to widen to $26 billion in Q1 FY23, from $23 billion in Q3 FY22 and an expected $16 billion in Q4 FY22," she said.

Oil imports double

Petroleum and crude oil imports more than doubled to $19.2 billion.

Coal, coke and briquettes imports jumped to $5.4 billion, from $2 billion.

Gold imports increased to $6 billion, from $677 million in May 2021.

Engineering goods exports increased by 12.7% to $9.7 billion, while petroleum products exports grew by 60.9% to $8.54 billion.

Gems and jewellery exports stood at $3.22 billion compared with $2.96 billion in May 2021.

Exports of chemicals rose 17.4% to $2.5 billion in May.

Similarly, shipments of pharma and ready-made garments of all textiles grew by 10.3% and 27.9% to $2 billion and $1.41 billion, respectively.

Export sectors that recorded negative growth in May included iron ore, cashew, handicrafts, plastics, carpet and spices.

The Commerce Ministry said the estimated value of services import for May was $14.43 billion, exhibiting a positive growth of 45% from $9.95 billion in the same month last year.

"The estimated value of services imports for April-May 2022 is $28.48 billion exhibiting a positive growth of 45.5%," it added.

5G will drive 'significant' advancements: analysts

'Spectrum base price remains an issue'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The much-awaited 5G spectrum auction will bring significant advancements for the industry and consumers, according to market watchers. However, some said the base price for spectrum remained an issue for bidders who were expecting much lower rates.

The auction and steps outlined for bidding would open up newer avenues for deeper penetration, access and rich user experience, said Peeyush Vaish, partner and Telecom Sector Leader, Deloitte India.

He noted that the Centre had also announced an auction of the millimetre-wave-band, which would not only help unlock the 'true' potential of 5G but would also help strategically manage costs for the operators.

'Much-awaited auction'

"The roads are now clear for 5G auctions. This is probably one of the most awaited spectrum auctions, which will bring significant advancements for the industry and the consumers," Mr. Vaish said, adding that the good part was that spectrum across bands would go under the hammer shortly.

Another aspect which would spur 'a good auction' was that operators would have the flexibility to surrender the spectrum after 10 years without any liabilities, he pointed out.

Jaideep Ghosh, chief operating officer of Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas, said the wide availability of spectrum across all bands was encouraging, as potential bidders could opt for spectrum bands and quantum as per their strategy.

"Having said that, the base prices for spectrum remain an issue for the bidders who were expecting a much lower price," Mr. Ghosh added.

In its meeting on June 14, the Union Cabinet had approved the auction of airwaves capable of offering fifth-generation, or 5G, telecom services, including ultra-high-speed Internet, and gave its nod to the setting up of captive 5G networks.

The auction will commence on July 26. The Cabinet has approved 5G auctions at reserve prices recommended by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), which had in April recommended an about 39% cut in the reserve, or floor, price for the sale of 5G spectrum for mobile services.

'Economic benefits'

Separately, the Broadband India Forum (BIF), which had batted for private 5G networks by enterprises, on Wednesday said the Cabinet's decision to enable captive networks was a forward-looking step that would drive digital transformation, augment industry efficiencies and lead to greater economic benefits.

BIF – whose members include Google, Amazon, Meta and Tata Consultancy Services – had pitched for direct allocation of spectrum for private 5G networks to enterprises at a nominal administrative fee, countering telcos' stand on the vexed issue.

U.S. Fed raises rate by 75 bps to tame inflation

Rate move biggest since 1994

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Economists said the rapid surge in inflation put the Fed behind the curve

The Federal Reserve announced the most aggressive interest rate increase in almost 30 years, raising the benchmark borrowing rate by 0.75 percentage points on Wednesday as it battles against surging inflation.

The Fed's policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee reaffirmed that it remained "strongly committed to returning inflation to its 2 percent objective" and that it expected to continue to raise the key rate.

Until recently, the central bank seemed set to approve a 0.5-percentage-point increase, but economists said the rapid surge in inflation put the Fed behind the curve, meaning it needed to react strongly to prove its resolve to combat inflation.

The move was the first 75-basis-point increase since November 1994.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell will hold a press conference after the meeting to provide more details on the central bank's plans, which will be closely watched for signals on how aggressive policymakers will be in coming meetings.

Committee members now see the federal funds rate ending the year at 3.4%, up from the 1.9% projection in March, according to the median quarterly forecast.

Petrol, diesel sales jump in June

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India's petrol consumption jumped by 54% and that of diesel by 48% in the first fortnight of June from a year earlier with continuing demand recovery from a relatively low base in 2021 when the world's third-biggest oil user was in the grip of the second wave of COVID-19.

Petrol sales by state-owned fuel retailers, which control roughly 90% of the market, at 1.28 million tonnes between June 1 and 14, was 54.2% higher than the same period last year.

Month-on-month sales were up 0.8%, preliminary industry data showed.

Diesel saw sales jumping 47.8% year-on-year to 3.4 million tonnes.

'Global oil demand to rise 2% to new high in 2023'

Sanctions on Russia stifling supply: IEA

REUTERS
LONDON

World oil demand will rise more than 2% to a record high of 101.6 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2023, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said, although sky-high oil prices and weakening economic forecasts dimmed the future outlook.

The Paris-based IEA also said in its report that supply was being constrained because of sanctions on Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.

"Economic fears persist, as various international institutions have recently released downbeat outlooks," the IEA said, forecasting demand would rise 2.2 million bpd, or 2.2%, in 2023 compared with 2022 and would exceed pre-pandemic levels.

"Tightening central bank policy, impact of a soaring U.S. dollar and rising interest rates on the purchasing power of emerging economies mean the risks to our outlook are concentrated on the downside," it said.

Advanced economies in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development would account for most demand growth in 2022, while China would lead the gains in 2023.

IN BRIEF

Yes Bank seeks investor nod to raise ₹10,000 cr.

NEW DELHI

Yes Bank will seek shareholders' approval next month to raise debt capital of ₹10,000 crore through various modes on a private placement basis. The funds may be raised in one or more tranches in domestic or overseas markets, the lender said. The bank's annual general meeting is scheduled for July 15, 2022. PTI

Wipro merges lighting with seating solutions

BENGALURU

Wipro Lighting has announced the creation of a new business unit combining commercial lighting and seating solutions.

On the rationale behind the merger, Anuj Dhir, VP and business head for Commercial & Institutional Business, said, "By combining Commercial Lighting and Seating Solution businesses, we aim to offer wider solutions to our customers in the B2B space."

IOB's plan to raise ₹2,000 cr. gets board nod

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The board of Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has approved a proposal to raise ₹2,000 crore during the current fiscal, subject to shareholders' approval.

The board approved the issue of equity shares to the maximum extent of ₹1,000 crore with appropriate premium either by way of follow-on public offer or rights issue, with or without participation from the Union government, it said in a regulatory filing.

It was also decided to raise tier II capital by way of issue of bonds up to a maximum of ₹1,000 crore, with or without greenshoe option, on a private placement basis to the retail segment by way of public issue either domestically or overseas.

JM Baxi plans to bid for ports, related projects

Projects valued at up to ₹7,000 cr.: MD

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

The company is also proposing an Initial Public Offering of ₹2,500 crore

JM Baxi Ports & Logistics Ltd. (JMBPLL), an integrated maritime logistics services provider, is planning to bid for various port and related projects such as rail links and cold chain facilities, valued at up to ₹7,000 crore, in five years, Dhruv Kotak, managing director, JMBPLL, said in an interview.

"The National Monetisation Pipeline of the Government of India (GOI) is lining up 30 to 40 projects in the next 3-to-5 years," he added.

"Thanks to GOI's initiatives such as National Infrastructure Pipeline, National Monetisation Pipeline, PM Gati Shakti as well as PLI scheme, the bidding opportunity for emerging projects with respect to the privatisation of major ports (including on a BOT basis) will be worth around ₹20,000 crore," Mr. Kotak said.

"We are targeting to bid for major port projects valued at anything from ₹3,000 crore to ₹5,000 crore out of this huge pie subject to various feasibility and competitive bidding parameters," he added.

JMBPLL also plans to bid an additional ₹1,500-to-₹2,000 crore in mostly brownfield projects in the port-linked land infrastructure during the next five years, Mr. Kotak said. The firm is also proposing an Initial Public Offering of ₹2,500 crore.

Schneider Electric unveils plans to equip data centres for 'net-zero' operations

'Demand for data centres insatiable; energy use must be measured, managed'

M. SOUNDARIYA PREETHA
PARIS

Schneider Electric has unveiled solutions to equip the IT infrastructure and data centre industry with the ability to ensure net-zero operations and sustainability.

"There is an insatiable demand for data centres," said Pankaj Sharma, executive vice-president, Secure Power Division, Schneider Electric, at a media conference in Paris recently. Though decarbonisation at data centres had accelerated in the recent past, data centres of the future needed to be more sustainable, efficient, adaptive, and resilient, he stressed.

Based on a Schneider Electric projection, total energy consumption by the IT sector would be 2,700 terrawatt-hours (TWh) by 2040, with 60% coming from distributed sites and 40% from data centres.

In the backdrop of the International Energy Agency's "net zero emissions" roadmap (Net Zero 2050), Schneider has unveiled plans to prepare the information technology and data centre industry for sustainability and 'net-zero' operations.

'Modular, compact UPS'

The company has introduced a modular, compact UPS (3 KW and 5 KW), which will hit the U.S. market initially and is expected in India next year. With lithium-ion technology, the single-phase UPS is scalable, occupies very little space, and is Green Premium certified.

Alexandra Thin, VP, Transactional and Edge Line of Business, said data centres were not located only in remote places but were becoming more distributed, located close to consumer points. So there was a need for compact technology, she pointed out.

According to Kevin Brown, senior VP of EcoStruxure Solutions, Secure Power, as IT infrastructure spreads, continuity of business depends on factors starting from the smallest end-point to the large data centre.

Software tools with enhanced capabilities were needed to maintain the resilience and security of the infrastructure, he said. The energy consumption and carbon footprint of data centres would need to be measured and managed.

(The journalist was in Paris recently at the invitation of Schneider Electric)

Chirpy Chahal finishes batters softly

The leg-spinner leaves them flummoxed with his revs, dip, drift and control

SA IN INDIA

S. DINAKAR
VISAKHAPATNAM

The little man floors the big guns. He does not employ heavy weapons either. He kills 'em softly.

Watching him at work, you are reminded of the Muhammed Ali song, "He floats like a butterfly and stings like a bee."

When Yuzvendra Chahal throws the ball up, he does the same. The revs on the ball cause it to either dip or drift.

The batter, whose eyes light up at the flighted delivery and who lines up for a massive hit, is flummoxed as he never quite reaches the ball.

The resultant catch is gobbled up. Chahal is the toast of his team.

Having a ball: Chahal produced a masterclass in the third T20I against South Africa on Tuesday. •K.R. DEEPAK

Attacking bowler

He is an attacking bowler, always on the look-out for wickets. And he lures the batsmen to their doom.

Chahal's three for 20 here on Tuesday night in the crucial third T20I, was a masterclass in the art of leg-spin.

He is a *jadugar*, a wrist-spinner with a bag of tricks. Chahal has a good wrong 'un, an effective flipper and a handy top-spinner to go with his potent leg-spinners. Importantly, he has control.

Chahal, bowling with rhythm and an easy action, consumed the dangerous Dwaine Pretorius whose dab shot came to nothing as the ball spun away slightly and nestled in 'keeper Rishabh Pant's gloves.

Rassie van der Dussen too succumbed to a leg-spinner with drift. He attempted to strike the sphere square but only managed to nick the ball.

One of Chahal's tricks when the opposition batters are going for runs is to throw the sphere wide. And making the batter reach for it. But then, these deliveries have drift and dip. The batter invariably ends up miscuing the stroke.

As it happened with Heinrich Klaasen, who, desperate for the big blows, pursued a fuller length and rather widish leg-spinner only to hole out at extra-cover.

Perfect night

The dismissal encapsulated the perfect night for Chahal. But then, hasn't he made a habit of becoming a game-changer?

In the shorter versions of the game, there is no better bowler than Chahal for India. In 61 ODIs, he has 104 wickets at an economy rate of 5.17. And in T20Is, Chahal has 72 wickets in 57 matches at 8.23.

It is hard to predict how he bowls. He can be a skiddy, slippery customer one day. Chahal can also get the ball to bounce using the seam.

He had a wonderful IPL for Rajasthan Royals this season. The 31-year-old Chahal won the purple cap for the highest number of wickets in the competition with 27.

He can bowl and deliver under immense pressure. Mentally tough and consistent he is.

Chahal is a jovial, chirpy individual with an eye for wickets.

'We wanted to show we were going after them'

Taking control: Ruturaj set the tone for the Indian innings with a busy knock. •K.R. DEEPAK

S. DINAKAR
VISAKHAPATNAM

What strikes you the most about Ruturaj Gaikwad is his composure. The calmness of his mind is his greatest ally. His lightness of feet and a wide repertoire of strokes are also his strengths. When he puts his dancing shoes on, he means business.

Ruturaj 35-ball 57 and his 97-run first-wicket partnership with Ishan Kishan in 10 overs built the platform for India.

Ruturaj said that he played to his strengths and did not indulge in slogging. "We did not take undue chances. When the ball was in our area we went for it."

He added, "We backed our strength. We also wanted to show intent to the bowlers that we were going after them, put them under pressure."

Ruturaj said the Indians had played well in the first two games too. "But the South Africans won the crunch moments. And they batted very well in the first two games. We did not play poorly."

The India opener conceded that the host's bowling was a lot better at Visakhapatnam. "There was greater intensity and focus in the bowling," he said.

South African captain Temba Bavuma said, "They put us under pressure. The conditions suited the slow bowlers. We were not able to handle them here."

Bavuma conceded "We were not able to put together any partnerships, build any momentum. It was an off-day for the batters. Quinton de Kock is our top player at the top, but he is injured and is not available."

Hardik to lead India in Ireland T20Is

Hardik. •K.R. DEEPAK

SPORTS REPORTER
RAJKOT

All-rounder Hardik Pandya, who led Gujarat Titans to the IPL 2022 title, will captain India in the two-match T20I series against Ireland to be played in Dublin on June 26 and 28.

Rishabh Pant, who is leading India in the ongoing T20I series against South Africa, and Shreyas Iyer will be joining the squad for the one-off Test against England.

The squads: India: Hardik Pandya (Capt.), Bhuvneshwar Kumar (Vice-capt.), Ishan Kishan, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Sanju Samson, Suryakumar Yadav, Venkatesh Iyer, Deepak Hooda, Rahul Tripathi, Dinesh Karthik (wk), Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel, Ravi Bishnoi, Harshal Patel, Avesh Khan, Arshdeep Singh, and Umran Malik.

Ireland: Andrew Balbirnie (Capt.), Mark Adair, Curtis Campher, Gareth Delany, George Dockrell, Stephen Doheny, Josh Little, Andrew McBrine, Barry McCarthy, Conor Olphert, Paul Stirling, Harry Tector, Lorcan Tucker, and Craig Young.

India will have to be on its toes against England, says McGrath

Swarming the Pigeon: MRF Pace Foundation's trainees in rapt attention to McGrath. •R. RAGU

PRANAY RAJIV
CHENNAI

There were flights of pigeons flying around the MRF Pace Foundation here on Wednesday as cricket's very own 'Pigeon', Glenn McGrath, stood assessing his wards with an eager eye.

McGrath, director of cricket at the foundation, was as composed with his words as he was with the ball during his playing days. He spoke to the media after a training session.

Praise for his wards

The Australian pace bowling legend expressed great pride in the way his trainees performed in IPL 2022. "All the MRF trainees have done well. Mukesh was impressive, the same with Avesh, Khaleel and Prasidh... I think 19 of our boys were involved in this season. It is one thing to come here and learn, and it is another thing to execute it in the middle," he said.

About England's win over New Zealand at Nottingham in the second Test on Tuesday, McGrath pointed out the impact of Ben Stokes' captaincy in addition to Brendon McCullum's influence.

"He [Stokes] is an aggressive cricketer who is bringing his brand of cricket into his captaincy. It has also helped Root play without pressure," said McGrath.

When asked about James Anderson going past the 650-mark in Tests, McGrath said, "For a fast bowler to take 650 wickets is just amazing. It just shows his longevity and work ethic."

Interesting match-up

On India's one-off Test in England next month, McGrath said: "They [Indians] have been there and played there. So they have the experience. It will be interesting because England is playing a very positive brand of cricket that reminds me a bit of the Australian side of my era. India will have to be on their toes against them."

Costa Rica completes line-up

Earns it the hard way with a 1-0 win over New Zealand

WC QUALIFYING

AASHIN PRASAD
AL RAYYAN

Costa Rica earned a hard-fought 1-0 win over 10-man New Zealand to become the final team to book its place in the finals of the FIFA World Cup on Tuesday. Joel Campbell struck the match-defining goal in the third minute in the inter-confederation playoffs at the Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium here.

After a fast start, Costa Rica broke up the field on the left, where Jewison Bennette played a cutback for Campbell to turn the ball into the bottom corner of the goal.

Surprisingly, it was just one-way traffic from there on with the All Whites camping themselves in Costa Rica's half of the pitch. They were sharper and quicker in possession and used Chris Wood's 6'3" frame up front to cause problems.

Alex Greive and Matthew Garbett squandered good opportunities from Wood's knockdowns inside the box. In the 39th minute, the Newcastle United striker struck the ball into the roof of the net but VAR ruled out the goal after spotting a foul in the build-up. After half-time, Costa Rica coach Luis Suarez made three substitutions, including the one of veteran Bryan Ruiz to help make better use of ball possession.

For New Zealand, substitute Kosta Barbarouses was sent off within nine minutes of coming on as he wiped out Francisco Clavo from behind and received his marching orders after a VAR check.

Despite New Zealand's numerous raids, *Los Ticos* held on and made it to their third straight World Cup.

(The writer is in Qatar at the invitation of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy)

Here we come, Qatar! Campbell celebrates after sending Costa Rica to the finals. •AFP

Groups for the 2022 World Cup finals in Qatar

- **Group A:** Qatar, Ecuador, Senegal, Netherlands
- **Group B:** England, Iran, USA, Wales
- **Group C:** Argentina, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Poland
- **Group D:** France, Australia, Denmark, Tunisia
- **Group E:** Spain, Costa Rica, Germany, Japan
- **Group F:** Belgium, Canada, Morocco, Croatia
- **Group G:** Brazil, Serbia, Switzerland, Cameroon
- **Group H:** Portugal, Ghana, Uruguay, South Korea

Prannoy gets the better of Lakshya for first time

Srikanth stunned by Leverdez; Arjun-Kapila duo advances

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAKARTA

H.S. Prannoy got the better of compatriot Lakshya Sen 21-10, 21-9 in 34 minutes in their opening round match at the Indonesia Open badminton tournament on Wednesday. It was Prannoy's first-ever win against Lakshya in three meetings so far.

K. Srikanth, back in action after nearly a month, was stunned by the 41st-ranked Brice Leverdez of France 21-23, 10-21. It was the Indian's first loss against the 36-year-old Frenchman in six matches.

In men's doubles, M.R. Arjun and Dhruv Kapila overcame the higher-ranked Japanese pair of Kelichiro Matsui and Yoshinori Takeuchi 27-25, 18-25, 21-19. However, it was curtains for the women's duo of Ashwini Bhat and Shikha Gautam as it lost 9-21, 10-21 to China's Zhang Shu Xian and Zheng Yu.

The other women's pair of Haritha M. Harinarayan and Ashna Noy suffered a 9-21, 8-21 loss against South Korea's Jeong Na Eun and Kim Hye Jeong.

Easily done: Prannoy had the measure of Lakshya in quick time. •BADMINTONPHOTO/COURTESY OF BWF

Country Club course will test skill, toughness

122nd U.S. Open tees off today

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BROOKLINE (US)

The mental fortitude of the world's finest golfers will be tested by unrelenting challenges and moments of adversity when the 122nd U.S. Open starts at The Country Club on Thursday.

Defending champion Jon Rahm, who won his first Major at oceanside Torrey Pines last year, seeks a repeat on a 7,254-yard layout at a 140-year-old urban club where golf has been played since the 1890s.

Rahm. •AFP

Old school

But it's the usual formidable US Open set-up. "It's going to be long rough and firm and fast greens," said the fifth-ranked American Justin Thomas. "It's old school."

It is a test of mental toughness as much as shot-making skills, said the second-ranked Rahm. "It's a US Open. You need everything," he said. "You need to drive well, hit your irons well, chip well and putt well, and be mentally sane for four days. You can't hide. Period."

Reigning British Open champion Collin Morikawa says acceptance is the best sign of good mental attitude.

"We're the best players in the world and we set ourselves high standards. Sometimes when you don't perform the way you want to, you can get upset. It can be frustrating," he said. "It's the small things that really make a difference. That's what it takes to win Majors."

Gill ready for Kenyan Safari

Says he used pandemic time to optimise his fitness

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Gaurav Gill looks almost restless to get back to racing action as he eyes a creditable finish in the World Rally Championship (WRC) Safari Rally in Kenya from June 23 to 26.

"I last raced before the pandemic set in and now I can't wait to get going," said Gill here on Wednesday. Gill, an Arjuna Awardee, will be driving Skoda Fabia R5 in the WR2 with Brazilian co-driver Gabriel Morales.

"This terrain is considered one of the toughest in the world and I need to have the right mindset to complete the course," said Gill. The safari comprises 19 special stages covering around 365km of competition, the challenges being closed dirt roads and rocky and rutted tracks, not to forget unpredictable weather.

A three-time Asia-Pacific Rally championship (APRC) winner, Gill mentioned how tough it was to deal with the days of the pandemic but was quick to add, "I made the most of the time on hand and worked a lot on optimising my fitness levels. There are stages when we drive up to 12-16 hours and lose 5-6 kgs of water weight. One needs to be in the best of shapes to be able to deal with the challenges."

Gaurav Gill. •FILE PHOTO

Gill's last competitive race in the WRC2 was the 2019 Rally of Turkey where he missed out on a top-five finish but his stupendous drive attracted a lot of praise from the driving community.

- JK Tyre has announced a scholarship programme that offers €300,000 to five talents, including one girl

About his expectations, Gill said, "I'm pretty hard on myself. I am looking to give it all and complete it in a good time."

Back home, the JK Tyre plans grand celebrations to mark its 25-year association with the National Racing championship while being optimistic about bringing back its marquee event at the Buddh International Circuit, Greater Noida.

JK Tyre's Head of Motorsports Sanjay Sharma also announced a scholarship programme that offers €300,000 to five talents, including one girl, across all verticals of motorsports.

Rising 17-year-old Amir Sayed is one of the beneficiaries of this programme. This Kottayam-based racer was the 2020 JK Tyre Novice Cup Champion having won all 12 races in his category.

Plans to bring MotoGP to India

FMSCI chief Akbar Ebrahim says discussions in progress

K. KEERTHIVASAN
CHENNAI

Plans are afoot to bring a round of the MotoGP and Formula-E World championships to India, and discussions on this front are in progress, according to Akbar Ebrahim, president, Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI).

In his keynote address at the FMSCI annual awards function to honour all the 2021 National champions, here on Wednesday, Ebrahim also announced that Chennai would be the venue for a round of the FIA World Rally Star (17-26 age group) in September, and to be organised by the Madras Motor Sports Club.

"We are also working towards getting a round of MotoGP and the Formula-E to India. The Formula-E is likely to be held on a street circuit in Hyderabad. As regards the FIA Rally Star, it is a gateway to youngsters targeting the World Rally Championship.

"Further, India has joined the FIM's Road to MotoGP programme through the World MiniGP championship which is restricted to those in the 10-14 years age group.

"Dorna Sports, promoters of MotoGP, and Italian bike manufacturer Ohvale are actively involved in the programme. The first of the five rounds will be held in July this year. At the end of the Indian series, the top two riders will qualify for the World Finals in Spain," Ebrahim said.

Champions' day out: The 2021 National winners with Akbar Ebrahim. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

LIVE TELECAST

Badminton: Indonesia Masters, Sports 18-1 & Voot Select, 7.30 a.m.
Ranji Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 9.30 a.m.
Sri Lanka vs Australia: 2nd ODI, Sony Six (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 2.30 p.m.
West Indies vs Bangladesh: 1st Test, day 1, FanCode, 7.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF

Parmjeet, Manpreet clinch bronze

NEW DELHI

Indian para powerlifters Parmjeet Kumar (lifted 169kg in 49kg open category) and Manpreet Kaur (88kg in 41kg category) put up impressive displays to win bronze medals at the 2022 Asia Oceania Open Championships in Pyeongtaek, South Korea, on Wednesday. PTI

Ridhima Dilawari in the van

BENGALURU

Ridhima Dilawari fired a three-under 69 to grab a three shot lead at the end of the first round of the eighth leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour, at Karnataka Golf Association course here on Wednesday. Ridhima, who has not won since January 2021, had three birdies in a row from the 11th to 13th holes.
The scores (top six): 69: Ridhima Dilawari; **72:** Trimann Saluja, Agrima Manral, Disha Kavery; **73:** Jahanvi Bakshi, Afshan Fatima.

Nunez completes move to Liverpool

LIVERPOOL

Liverpool secured the signing of Darwin Nunez from Benfica on Tuesday for a fee that could rise to a club record €100 million. The club has splashed an initial €75 million on the 22-year-old with an extra €25 million in performance-related add-ons. AFP

Indian u-12 tennis teams on a roll

KATHMANDU

The Indian boys outplayed Maldives 3-0, dropping just one game in all, in the league phase of the ITF South Asia under-12 tennis tournament in Kathmandu on Wednesday. In the girls' round-robin league, India beat host Nepal 3-0, losing only six games.
The results (league): Boys: India bt Maldives 3-0 (Tavish Pahwa bt Mika Mohamed Kaleem 6-0, 6-0; Fazal Ali Meer bt Adam Aal Niyaz 6-0, 6-1; Kushagra Arora & Tavish bt Adam & Ibrahim Zafayaan Salaam 6-0, 6-0).
Girls: India bt Nepal 3-0 (Prachi Malik bt Pranja Manandhar 6-0, 6-2; Aahan bt Shivali Gurung 6-0, 6-0; Prachi & Anandita Upadhyay bt Shivali & Karmishtha Nugah Shrestha 6-2, 6-2).

Tamore's gritty ton takes Mumbai to a sound position

Mulani chips in with a half-century; Uttar Pradesh ends day two on 25 for two, trails by 368 runs

RANJI TROPHY

AMOL KARHADKAR
BENGALURU

A typically gritty performance from a team used to winning crucial matches ensured that Mumbai went from a relatively tricky position at the end of the first day to one of strength by the time a truncated second day ended.

Heavy overnight showers meant that play could only begin at 12.30 p.m. Once it did, the going was slow, initially, for the pitch had been under covers and sweated.

Swing factor: Tamore, in the company of Mulani, put the Mumbai innings on the recovery path. •K. PICHUMANI

Invaluable

In this context, the 113-run sixth-wicket partnership between Hardik Tamore (115) and Shams Mulani (50) proved invaluable. Both batters were solid, and after one ball beat the outside edge of Mulani early on, there were few scares.

Uttar Pradesh's bowlers were disciplined, the medium-pacers maintaining a fifth-stump line for the best part, hoping the batters would make a mistake.

Mulani was dismissed against the run of play when Karan Sharma brought himself into the attack, perhaps a touch later than expected given his twin successes on the first day, drawing the bat-pad catch to forward short leg.

Common sense

But the day belonged to Tamore. In the knowledge that there were enough hands in the lower order to keep him company, he batted with application and common sense, playing some crisp drives when the bowlers erred in length and were too full.

Tamore, playing only his fifth Ranji Trophy match, and first as wicketkeeper after Aditya Tare fractured the middle finger of his right hand in the quarterfinals, showed the depth in Mumbai cricket.

Choking the runs

Tamore was batting on 98 at tea, and Uttar Pradesh attempted to delay his century by choking the runs. But he unfurled a reverse sweep off Karan and got to his second First Class century, off 172 balls.

Tanush Kotian chipped in with 22 and when Tamore was dismissed as the last man, Mumbai had got to 393.

Uttar Pradesh's inexperienced batting line-up was put under pressure immediately. Dhawal Kulkarni took the ball away from right-handed batters and Tushar Deshpande shaped it back in.

Both were rewarded. Samarth Singh went for a duck, nicking off to the keeper in the first over. Soon after, UP was four for two when Priyam Garg played away from his body, driving on the up to Deshpande that seamed in and pegged back the middle stump.

UP managed to avoid further damage, going to stumps on 25 for two, trailing by 368 runs.

The scores: Mumbai — 1st innings: Prithvi Shaw c Garg b Dayal 0, Yashasvi Jaiswal c Jurel b Karan 100, Armaan Jaffer lbw b Mavi 10, Suved Parkar c Saurabh b b Dayal 32, Sarfaraz Khan c Jurel b Karan 40, Hardik Tamore c Jurel b Saurabh 115, Shams Mulani c Kaushik b Karan 50, Tanush Kotian c Mavi b Saurabh 22, Dhawal Kulkarni c sub b Saurabh 0, Tushar Deshpande c Jurel b Karan 1, Mohit Avasthi (not out) 0; Extras (b-13, lb-7, nb-2, w-1): 23; Total (in 140.4 overs): 393.

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-24, 3-87, 4-170, 5-233, 6-346, 7-386, 8-392, 9-393.

Uttar Pradesh bowling: Dayal 23-6-51-2, Rajpoot 27-4-76-0, Mavi 18-3-52-1, Saurabh 39.4-11-107-3, Prince 16-4-41-0, Karan 17-5-46-4.

Uttar Pradesh — 1st innings: Madhav Kaushik (batting) 11, Samarth Singh c Tamore b Kulkarni 0, Priyam Garg b Deshpande 3, Karan Sharma (batting) 10; Extras (lb-1): 1; Total (for two wkts. in 12 overs): 25.

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-4.

Mumbai bowling: Kulkarni 6-0-14-1, Deshpande 5-1-10-1, Mulani 1-1-0-0.

Manoj Tiwary and Shahbaz Ahmed pull Bengal out of the woods

Their unbroken sixth-wicket stand of 143 takes the team to 197 in reply to Madhya Pradesh's 341

AYAN ACHARYA
BENGALURU

Manoj Tiwary (84, 182b, 9x4) and Shahbaz Ahmed (72, 149b, 9x4) showed stomach for a fight after a lamentable first dig from their top order saw Bengal crumble to 54 for five in response to Madhya Pradesh's first-innings score of 341 during the second day of their Ranji Trophy semifinal in Alur on Wednesday. The pair's unbroken stand of 143 took Bengal to 197 for five at stumps, still 144 behind.

Poor start

It looked like a good day for fast bowling – damp and overcast for the large part. But MP, instead, opened with Kumar Kartikeya's (two for 43) left-arm orthodox spin. The move worked as Kartikeya removed Abhishek Raman and Sudip Gharami for ducks in the very first over.

Off-spinner Saransh Jain struck immediately after lunch when Anustup Majumdar nicked to first slip. Walking in at 11 for three, Tiwary swept and reverse swept Saransh for three fours. All the while Abhimanyu Easwaran had been solid in defence, putting on 33 with Tiwary.

But Abhmanyu's dismissal off Puneet Datey's bowling was a blow. And Bengal lurched from bad to worse when Abishek Porel holed out at deep-square off the same bowler.

Seasoned pro: Manoj Tiwary showed the value of experience with an unbeaten 84. •K. MURALI KUMAR

However, Tiwary and Shahbaz Ahmed fought back in earnest. There was a brief scare when Shahbaz was caught behind on 15. But the umpires checked for a bump ball, and the replays confirmed it was collected on the half-volley. Otherwise, he held firm. Tiwary too batted beautifully. He swept the spinners confidently and repelled the seamers with authority.

Earlier, overnight showers delayed the start of the second day until 10 a.m. Bengal quick Mukesh Kumar (four for 66) looked for swing and was guilty of being too full.

Himanshu Mantri first drove Sayan Mondal over the infield to get to his 150 before tickling one down to fine leg for four more.

Mantri's 327-ball vigil ended when he edged behind for 165 (327b, 19x4, 1x6) . He walked back to a standing ovation.

The scores:

Madhya Pradesh — 1st innings: Yash Dubey lbw b Mukesh 9, Himanshu Mantri c Abhishek Porel b Mukesh 165, Shubham Sharma b Pramanik 17, Rajat Patidar c Tiwary b Mukesh 7, Aditya Shrivastava b Shahbaz Ahmed 10, Akshat Raghuwanshi lbw b Akash 63, Saransh b Akash 17, Puneet Datey c Abishek Porel b Shahbaz Ahmed 33, Anubhav Agarwal (not out) 2, Kumar Kartikeya c Akash b Shahbaz Ahmed 6, Gaurav Yadav c Abishek Porel b Mukesh 0; Extras (b-7, lb-2, nb-3): 12; Total (in 105.3 overs): 341.

Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-59, 3-72, 4-97, 5-220, 6-259, 7-323, 8-333, 9-340.

Bengal bowling: Mukesh 27.3-6-66-4, Akash 26-7-73-2, Mondal 14-3-47-0, Shahbaz 20-3-86-3, Pramanik 14-0-50-1, Tiwary 4-0-10-0.

Bengal — 1st innings: Abhishek Raman b Kartikeya 0, Abhimanyu Easwaran c Mantri b Puneet 22, Sudip Gharami b Kartikeya 0, Anustup Majumdar c Patidar b Saransh 4, Manoj Tiwary (batting) 84, Abishek Porel c Shubham b Puneet 9, Shahbaz Ahmed (batting) 72; Extras (lb-6): 6; Total (for five wkts. in 66 overs): 197.

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-0, 3-11, 4-44, 5-54.

Madhya Pradesh bowling: Kartikeya 25-9-43-2, Saransh 16-3-58-1, Puneet 9-0-34-2, Anubhav 5-1-18-0, Gaurav 8-1-24-0, Shubham 3-0-14-0.

Sunil Chhetri climbs another peak

Striker is joint 5th highest scorer in international football

ANI
KOLKATA

Sunil Chhetri – the Indian men's football team captain – became the joint fifth highest goalscorer in international football history.

Chhetri achieved this feat during India's AFC Asian Cup Qualifier clash against Hong Kong on Tuesday, where he scored his 84th goal. He has now equalled legendary Real Madrid and Hungarian player Ferenc Puskas goals-scoring exploits on the international stage.

Sunil Chhetri. •PTI

Earlier in October 2021, Chhetri had surpassed legendary football player Pele's record of 77 goals. He is now third on the list of active international goalscorers, just behind Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo and Argentina's Lionel Messi.

Currently, Ronaldo is the highest goalscorer in international football with 117 goals, while Messi is in fourth with 86.

Hungary humbles abject England

Germany rampant against Italy

On fire: Sallai rifles in Hungary's second past a flailing Walker. •REUTERS

NATIONS LEAGUE

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WOLVERHAMPTON

England suffered its worst home defeat since 1928 with a 4-0 loss to Hungary in the Nations League on Tuesday. It was England's biggest home loss since being beaten 5-1 by Scotland 94 years ago.

European champion Italy had it little better as it was beaten 5-2 by Germany. It was 5-0 down before scoring two late goals.

The results: League A: Group 3: England 0 lost to Hungary 4 (Sallai 16, 70, Nagy 80, Gazdag 89); Germany 5 (Kimmich 10, Gundogan 45+4-pen, Mueller 51, Werner 68, 69) bt Italy 2 (Gnonto 78, Bastoni 90+4).
Group 4: The Netherlands 3 (Lang 17, Gakpo 23, Depay 90+3) bt Wales 2 (Johnson 26, Bale 90+2-pen); Poland 0 lost to Belgium 1 (Batshuayi 16).
League B: Group 1: Armenia 1 (Bichakhchyan 6) lost to Scotland 4 (Armstrong 14, 45+1, McGinn 50, Adams 54); Ukraine 1 (Dovbyk 47) drew with Republic of Ireland 1 (Collins 31).
Group 3: Bosnia-Herzegovina 3 (Pjanic 5-pen, Dzeko 29, 58) bt Finland 2 (Pukki 10, Kallman 18); Romania 0 lost to Montenegro 3 (Mugosa 42, 56, 63).
League C: Group 1: Luxembourg 2 (Rodrigues 12-pen, Martins Pereira 49) drew with Faroe Islands 2 (Bjartalid 57, 59); Turkey 2 (Ayhan 37, Calhanoglu 54-pen) bt Lithuania 0.

SNAPSHOTS

Russian, Belarusian players can compete at U.S. Open

NEW YORK:

Russian and Belarusian players will be allowed to compete at the U.S. Open this year but only under a neutral flag, the United States Tennis Association (USTA) announced on Tuesday. Players from Russia and Belarus are not being allowed to compete at Wimbledon later this month, a move which prompted the ATP and WTA Tours to strip the Grand Slam of its ranking points.
Russian and Belarusian players are currently allowed to compete on the ATP and WTA Tours as neutrals. The main draw of the U.S. Open begins on Aug. 29. REUTERS

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Bowring Institute beats Sadashivanagar Club

Bowring Institute defeated Sadashivanagar Club 643-587 in the Chandra Bhatia inter-club snooker championship.
The results:
KSCA Club House bt Koramangala Club 746-564.
Bowring Institute bt Sadashivanagar Club 643-587.
Bangalore City Institute bt HBCC 609-593.
Century Club 'B' bt RMV Club 726-583.

SUFC inaugurates its academy facility

South United Football Club (SUFC) inaugurated its academy facility at the club's headquarters on Gangadhar Chetty Road on Wednesday.
The academy has three Elite Youth Teams in the under-13, 15, and 18 categories, which will also compete in the Youth League.
The inauguration ceremony was attended by SUFC owner Sharan Parikh and Karnataka State Football Association president N.A. Haris.
The training complex boasts of a gym, access to physiotherapists, nutrition specialists, ice baths and steam baths.

Vehicles FC posts win

Vehicles FC edged out Mohammedan Sporting 3-2 in the BDFA 'B' division football league on Wednesday.
The result:
Vehicles 3 (R. Satish 15, 58, Murali 22) bt Mohammedan Sporting 2 (Sheldon Magnol 66, Gowtham 70).